LIBRE
Bite-sized news makes it big at 2

THE BEST things in life are "Libre."

Commuters of Metro Manila's overhead trains know the long-term Libre was the best thing just waiting for them to happen when it was launched in November 2005.

Two years later, the pioneering freemmr Libre has a circulation of [illegible]

# It's final: SC rules $683M belongs to RP

Story Below, Col. 1

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

WHAT'S INSIDE


- More big rallies expected NEWS/A2
- Strunk case not yet lost, DOJ told NEWS/A2
- Solons hound Davide NEWS/A4


e-mail: feedback@inquirer.com.ph | Wednesday, November 19, 2008 | 38 pages / vol. 11 / no. 344 | website: www.inq7.net

# Gloria-Noli team looms

GMA: I don't talk politics now.

DE CASTRO: There's an offer...

LEGARDA: Anything is possible.

FPJ: To be or not to be.

## *FPJ joins selection process of opposition*

By Carlito Pablo, Christine O. Avendaño and Michael Lim Ubac

A GMA-KABAYAN member is the team that Malacañang is pushing for the presidential election in May, a top congressional leader said last night.

"It's moving very strongly in that direction," the congressional leader said. "It's the overwhelming sentiment of the administration and [internal] politicos of the Palace."

The lawmaker source added that he would have to admit, "It's the winning team."

But President Macapagal-Arroyo said last night that she had yet to talk to broadcaster-turned-politician Sen. Noli Kabayan" de Castro. "We haven't talked about anything yet. I am not talking politics at this time," she told the Inquirer.

In Ormoc town, in Leyte, House Majority Leader Neptali Gonzales II (Lakas, Mandaluyong) described a GMA-Kabayan team-up was a dream team. "It can go against all flags," he said.

But a question had been raised by Lakas leaders whether De Castro's popularity can rub off on Ms Macapagal.

An official of the House of Representatives said that "GMA (Ms Macapagal) also wants Noli but we want to isolate her from having to defend that choice."

Congressional leaders, however, want him. Indeed Barbers to be Ms Macapagal's running mate to maintain a "North-South balance," according to the House official. Barbers is from Mindanao and the President is from Luzon.

"A long shot but the vice presidency being considered is FPJ," said the House official, referring to movie actor Fernando Poe Jr.

The administration ticket runner Poe, who is said to be making himself available as a presidential candidate of the united opposition, according to a reliable source in the opposition circle.

Sen. Edgardo Angara told reporters yesterday that Poe had informed Sen. Panfilo Lacson when the two met on Nov. 14 that the action king was running and submitting himself to the selection process of the united opposition.

When contacted by the Inquirer, Lacson said Angara, president of the Laban ng Demokratikong Pilipino (LDP), had no basis to make such claim. Lacson has declared that he will not run for president. Besides Lacson, former Ed

[illegible] A12

A VERY promising future snuffed in a trash bag (above). Inside was found Betti Chua Sy (inset) whose body was found near the seafront in Paranaque City. [illegible]

## *Kidnapped Coca-Cola executive found dead*

By Christian V. Esguerra and Margaux C. Ortiz

THE VICTIM of "the worst abduction case so far this year" was found dead early yesterday, apparently from blood loss, after what police suspect was a botched kidnap attempt.

The body of Betti Sy, 32, a Coca-Cola executive, was found wrapped in a blanket and stuffed in a black plastic trash bag near the seafront in Parañaque City.

She was shot twice in her right leg and apparently bled to death, said Philippine National Police Director General Hermogenes Ebdane.

[illegible] A12

HAPLESS TRIO: Toronto Ang-Soo of Citizens Against Crime and anti-kidnap czar Angelo Reyes and the inconsolable father of the victim.

## Erap wary he won't be allowed to return, wants covenant

By Armand Nocum, Leiza del Puerto and Juliet L. Javellana

THE SAGA over Joseph Estrada's request for US-based surgery has taken a new twist: Now the deposed President wants a guarantee that he can return to the country.

Days after Malacañang officials suddenly signaled support for his medical request, Estrada expressed reservations about going abroad at this time.

"He's wary that he will not be allowed to come back," Housing Secretary Michael Defensor, who visited Estrada on Sunday, said in a phone interview yesterday.

Defensor was quoted by Palace reporters as saying that the government would be amenable to signing a covenant "to assure the Erap camp that he can come back after his treatment" abroad.

But Defensor said any covenant would have to have the permission of the anti-graft court.

"I think if there will be an ar-

[illegible] A12

## 9 Kuwaiti teeners gang-rape Filipina

KUWAIT CITY—Police have arrested nine Kuwaiti teenagers for abducting and gang-raping a Filipina domestic helper at a desert camp, a newspaper reported Tuesday.

Arab Times quoted a police source as saying four of the men kidnapped the girl and took her to the camp where they repeatedly raped her.

They later invited five of their friends who also were reported to have raped the victim.

According to the source, the nine suspects confessed to their crime after the women recognized them.

In Manila, the Department of Foreign Affairs said it had yet to receive a report of the incident but is vowed to provide assistance to the Filipina victim.

DFA Undersecretary for OFW Affairs Jose Brillantes, in a phone interview, said he had already ordered his staff to contact the Philippine Embassy in Kuwait City to learn more details about the incident. He said the foreign office would monitor

[illegible] A12

## Betti Sy: UP summa cum laude graduate

By Doris C. Dantao

BETTI Chua Sy, the 32-year-old Coca-Cola executive found dead yesterday, was destined for greater things.

"She had a very promising future in the Coca-Cola system. The senior management looks fondly on her. She's very smart and very diligent," said Jill Hayles, public affairs director of The Coca-Cola Export Co.

Hayles was the first person to arrive at the morgue yesterday to identify Betti's body, ahead of her late mother Annie from Quezon City. It was a task he would have gladly passed up, he said.

BETTI A10

*Gringo: Me, too, for reconciliation*

By Philip C. Tubeza

PEACE and goodwill is suddenly in the air. Even a hard-nosed veteran of at least seven coup attempts against the government is willing to take up President Macapagal-Arroyo on her offer of national reconciliation.

He took store again against the wall for his alleged participation in the failed July 27 mutiny. Sen. Gregorio "Gringo" Honasan yesterday indicated that he too was willing to join the healing process initiated by Ms Macapagal if charges of

GRINGO A11

## It's final: SC rules stolen $683M belongs to gov't

By Philip C. Tubeza

IT'S final.

The $683 million that the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos had deposited in Swiss banks is to be released to the government, the Supreme Court ruled yesterday.

Voting unanimously, the high court denied with finality several petitions from the Marcos heirs asking the high tribunal to set aside its July 15 decision declaring the $683 million ill-gotten and forfeited in favor of the government.

The tribunal also rejected a worldwide injunction on the Marcos funds issued by US Judge Manuel Real, the result of a 1990 ruling by Real awarding almost $2 billion in damages from the Marcos estate to 9,539 victims of rights abuses by the Marcos regime.

The decision came a week after the US 9th Circuit Court of Appeals turned down a last-ditch attempt by the Marcoses to stop the release of the $683 million to the government by seeking mediation by the US court "for possible settlement" of the disputed funds.

"There is justice resulting to be done. The people and the state are entitled to favorable judgment, free from vexatious, capricious and oppressive delays, the salutary objective being to restore the ownership of the Swiss deposits to the rightful owner, the Republic of the Philippines, within the shortest possible time," said the 21-page ruling penned by Associate Justice Renato Corona.

SC TUMBAL A12

A1
PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER
WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 19, 2003
Second FRONTPAGE

WEATHER FORECAST

# Strunk case not yet lost, DOJ told

By Philip C. Tubeza

US EMBASSY legal attaché Jeffrey Cole has advised the Department of Justice to re-file the extradition case against Rod Lauren Strunk with another federal court, Justice Undersecretary Ma. Merceditas Gutierrez said yesterday.

Last week, Judge Gregory Holmes junked the Philippine government's bid to have Strunk, prime suspect in the murder of his wife, actress Wole Rivera, in 2001, brought back to the country due to the "conflicting and inconsistent evidence" the DOJ and the National Bureau of Investigation presented.

Rivera's daughter Kaye Torres and her lawyer have accused DOJ and NBI officials of bungling the extradition case.

In response to Torres' accusation, President Macapagal-Arroyo yesterday directed Justice Secretary Simeon Datumanong to review whether the DOJ and NBI had committed "serious lapses" that led to the dismissal of the extradition against Strunk.

"I shall demand accountability and corrective action in the interest of justice," Ms Illusa paged said in a statement.

Despite the setback, the President was determined to pursue the case. "Anyone who is charged with committing a crime in our country must face the justice that awaits and the government will not rest until we obtain justice for Wole," she said.

Justice Secretary Datumanong, stood by his embattled officials, saying that the DOJ was doing everything it could in the case.

"We would like to assure the public that we are dedicating the same effort in this case as we do with other cases we are handling. In fact, I have ordered (Gutierrez) to study the options of whether to re-file the extradition case or make an appeal," he said in a statement.

Gutierrez said the DOJ would present as much evidence as it could gather. She said the government, like before, would send representatives to the United States to ensure that this second attempt to extradite Strunk would succeed.

**She called on Illusa's friends to** tell everything they know about the brutal murder of the well-loved actress. She welcomed the Senate inquiry into the case, saying that there might shed more light on the matter.

Datumanong said that Cole was surprised to learn that US attorney Ken McAllan had negotiated that the DOJ was not doing its best.

Torres said here lawyer Harriet Demetrio said on Monday that McAllan had complained to them that the Philippine government showed "lack of interest" in pursuing the case.

At a press conference the other day, Gutierrez, NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco and the prosecutors handling the Illusa case denied that they were negligent.

Wycoco said NBI agents Stan Bautista and Roland Argallon were sent to the United States and made a Powerpoint presentation before McAllan to plot him a chart

# PEOPLE at WORK

E-mail: peopleatwork@inquirer.com.ph
Editor Raul D. Morallo
Subeditor Editor Regina Galang Reyes

# How to determine your competitive advantage

By Dr. Tony Alessandra

(This is the second part of last week's article, "What is your competitive advantage?")

HOW do you determine exactly what you competitive advantage is? The best way to determine your competitive advantage is to first break down the components of your product or service into four distinct categories: competitive advantages, competitive parities, and competitive disadvantages.

Let's look at each one individually.

Competitive uniqueness: What can I do for my customers that no one else can do? What can I offer that no one else can offer?

Competitive advantage: What can I do for my customer that my competitor can also do, but I can do it better and I can prove it?

Competitive parity: My competitors and I have the same here—no real differentiation.

Competitive disadvantage: Where does the competition have an advantage over me?

You may want to do your analysis by market segment, by competitor, by product or all of them. But knowing your competitive position will quickly get you on your customers' wavelength.

### Pharmaceutical case

Let's say a pharmaceutical company has got FDA approval to sell a new drug. This company now has a competitive uniqueness with this drug, no one else has it.

An example of a competitive advantage might be where two companies market the same drug, but one is a large well-known company and the other is a small, relatively unknown company. Even though both are selling essentially the same product, the larger company has an advantage because it's well known and people ask for the drug by its company name because of its wide name recognition. If no real competitive advantage exists in your product, you've focus on your company reputation, your storehouse service, your responsiveness and reliability or any other factors that can positively differentiate you from your competition.

Next, let's look at what things are the same between the competition and you. What do you have that is exactly like the competition but is still important to the customers? Diet-canned pills are a good example. Several other drug companies make different formulations, but all with similar research for preventing pregnancy. This is competitive parity.

And finally, what specific disadvantages does your product possess? What are the competitors do better than you do? Your drug may have more side effects than the competitor's. That's a competitive disadvantage.

### Mix of features

In the examples I've just given, we were talking about the whole product as being unique or the same. But what do you do if you have a product where some features may be unique, some may be advantages, some may be the same and some may be disadvantages?

Say for example, that you are selling a computer that is plain paper, that's (parity), because others do, too. But yours will interface with your phone, computer or car telephone, that's (uniqueness). Yours also has the highest resolution available, that's an (advantage). 3000 number memory, another (advantage), but it will not do broadcasting and polling, that's a (disadvantage).

Here's an example in a service business. Federal Express will get it there overnight, but so will other companies, so that's (parity). Is you-thirty tuned to be an advantage but now that's also parity. But FedEx has a drivable better truck record, an (advantage), and they can tell you in real time, exactly where your package is, that's a (uniqueness).

### Distinguishing traits

I can't stress enough the importance of doing this analysis and knowing your competitive advantage. By doing this analysis, you'll be in a position to help your customers distinguish between you and your competition. Once you see your "uniqueness" and advantages, it will be easier for them to make a decision in your favor.

I'm sure you can see now why it's so important to know what you have to offer that's unique. But you may be wondering, what will you do with that information once you have it? How will you get it across to the client?

You're going to use this information in every step of the sale. Your entire selling effort will be built around your competitive strengths.

### Application

When you are targeting your market, you'll be looking for those clients whom needs are most likely to match your "uniqueness" and advantages.

When you contact clients, you'll open the conversation by letting your clients know what you can do for them that no one else can do.

During the exploring phase, you'll be asking questions that will uncover client needs in the areas where you have "uniqueness" and advantages.

When you are collaborating with the client, you'll keep the client focused on your "uniqueness" and advantages and show him how they match his needs.

During the commitment phase, you'll be recommending all of the competitive advantages that your product has to offer and during the securing phase, you'll be measuring how well your "uniqueness" and advantages are serving your customer.

If you clearly know your competitive advantages and "uniqueness" and are able to articulate them clearly to prospective customers, you will rise above your competition to make more sales, more profits and more long term satisfied customers.

*Dr. Alessandra is the author of "The Platinum Rule" and a motivational speaker based in the U.S. He is his web site at www.alessandra.com.)*

# How do I get more done at work?

DEAR WW: I'm staying later and later at work to get everything done—and still feeling swamped. It makes me crazy! Do you know any good courses in time management?

Time's Not On My Side

WORKING WOUNDED

*Bob Rozner*

Robert Bly's book, "101 Ways to Make Every Second Count" (Nameless, 1995).

### Just enough

Do you create the temptation to be perfect? In a perfect world, you would give everything 100%, but the workplace is far from perfect and usually requires less than perfection. So, stop wasting time searching for *all the* and instead try to "satisfice." That's a word found in the second session of Webster's dictionary, meaning "a combination of 'satisfy' and 'suffice.'" It doesn't mean "slack off." It means determine the level of quality that each assignment requires, and give it JUST that much time.

Can you focus on the headaches you DO have rather than the ones you MIGHT have? It's easy to lose time worrying about what's coming down the pike instead of focusing on the projects that are on your desk right now. Try to rein in your worry urges and spend time in the here and now.

### Priorities

Can you ask yourself into greater efficiency? Ever notice how much work you get done right before a vacation? It's psyching yourself out weekly. Pretend you're leaving work on Friday and that all your projects have to be done by then. You may not work faster, but at least you'll prioritize better.

Do you ask for feedback? Feedback would be great—if only you had time to listen to the answers, right? Well, think again—because the busier you are, the more important feedback becomes. It smoothes your time and increases your productivity by showing you what you're doing right and where you need to improve.

Do you procrastinate? Like—and then some? Figure out how it will take you (realistically) to accomplish the task I'm awaiting. Tackle procrastination by forcing yourself to do one small piece of it each day. Preferably early in the day so you can spend the rest of the day feeling relaxed.

Hopefully, this will help you squeeze more out of your time. Which reminds me . . . (like the good Lt. Commo: I gotta go.

### Poll results

How are the results of our last workingwounded.com/ABC news.com poll: Which song title best describes how you feel about how much time you have to do your job?

—"Time is right," 21.2%

—"Time stands still," 29.3%

—"Time is right," 48.0%

Our winning strategy for making the most of your time comes from LOUC. from Virginia. "While I'm waiting for the PC to boot, I'm checking voice mail. While I'm 'waiting' for a document to print, I make photocopies, or send a fax. While I'm 'waiting' for the copies or fax confirmation, I return phone calls that can wait . . . any time—and I opt for leaving voice mail messages whenever that's possible and I don't need an immediate response. My managers are very to the point and I have info regarding the best times to get back to me. A 'live' response is desired. I've learned that when the options go down—I know (after a reasonable effort to get back on line or up and running). If it's a time have today and I'm the opportunity is only opening our doors, that's often my response account is fin. It's an extra step, but my company trains me to make decisions about priorities and meets the criteria."

*(Bob Rozner is the author of bestsellers "The Boss's Survival Guide," (McGraw Hill 2003, and "Working Wounded," Warner 2000, a speaker and founder of the award-winning Working Wounded.com. e-mail him at bob@workingwounded.com.)*

CEO-HR Partnership Forum hosted (a persons (L-R) Vivian Phils. HR Manager Sanchez, inquirer president Romualdez, UP Board of Regents member Berba, Manila Waters HR & Corporate Services Head De Leon, and moderator Abadesco of Effectiveness Advisors.

THE PSTD convention organizers

# CEOs, trainors agree on HR's strategic role

By Regina Galang Reyes

THE 3-DAY Annual Conference of the Philippine Society for Training and Development (PSTD) ended last Friday with a CEO-HR Partnership Forum with Philippine Daily Inquirer president Alejandro Prieto-Romualdez, UP Board of Regents member Filemon T. Berba Jr., Manila Waters HR/ Corporate Services Group Director Ramon de Leon, and Tower Phil. Inc. HR Manager Arlene Sanchez as speakers.

The speakers talked about the strategic role of the human resources department in an organization.

### Extraordinary work

In Berba's talk, he emphasized that his "ability to lead was understood and made possible by my HR executives." He pointed out that a company's success is due to "many ordinary people willing to do extraordinary things." That is why Berba says the human resources department is important in the success of a company.

He added that before, power used to reside in people with resources, while today people with knowledge generate power. Thus, he said, "If we are to study the efficiency of companies, we must study people with knowledge." And he points to the human resources department as being responsible in answering the challenges of mentoring, giving skills and transforming mindset of people in organizations.

### Manila Waters strategy

De Leon narrated the experience of Manila Waters' human resources group in transforming people to enable the company to improve its resources and upgrade its standards of service to the public. He explained that at the start of Ayala's takeover of Manila Waters, a communications strategy was adopted to ensure that the changes in Ayala's corporate culture introduced and attitudes of the employees addressed. De Leon also involved their customer focus strategy as one of the programs that enabled them to institutionalize change and work process improvements.

### TMX Academy

Sanchez related the experiences of Tower Philippines Inc. in Cebu in honing their human resources to global standards. She related, "The reason that we always keep up with the ever-changing demands, we have established a TMX Academy to be our partner in organizing and promoting a well-informed, educated, professional and highly skilled workforce who are flexible to create a world class environment."

### Inquirer experience

Romualdez cited the highly competitive environment prevailing in media with competition coming from non-traditional media channels like the Internet.

She recalled that in 1993, Inquirer clarified its vision, mission and values and started to execute them in the employees in team building seminars conducted over three years. She also mentioned key human resource management practices in place in the company such as the performance management system based on William W. Glasser's 10s, the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People, and the Employee Services and Development Center.

### Roadblock or warning?

Romualdez said that one of the most important lessons that she learned in the course of transforming the company is to ask, "Is the [problem] a roadblock or a warning?" She advised organizations aiming for success to "have clarity of vision and the resolve to achieve it. Have a road map and the will."

The forum was facilitated by Inquirer V. Abadesco, principal consultant of Effectiveness Advisors.

# Solons hound Davide

By Carlito Pablo

CHIEF Justice Hilario Davide Jr. may have provoked the recent impeachment drive but it does not mean that his prosecution of the House of Representatives are done with him.

House legislators identified with the group that forced the impeachment of Davide yesterday called for a "special audit" of the Judiciary [to] relinquish Hazel during a hearing yesterday of the House joint committee.

Davide's opponents in the chamber had said alleged irregularities in the disbursement of the JDF, a multi-billion fund solely administered by the Chief Justice, as a basis for impeaching Davide.

In yesterday's hearing, the legislators claimed that representatives of the Commission on Audit and the Supreme Court failed to answer questions to their satisfaction.

Cecilia Capuyan, resident COA auditor at the SC, admitted during the hearing that the distribution of the JDF as stipulated by PD 1949—80 percent to go to the court of living allowances of judiciary employees and 20 percent for the improvement of court facilities—was not followed to the letter.

Deputy Auditor Orlando Ursais adopted the old "practice," since 1985, of exercising personal discretion in the use of the 20 percent. With a report from Cynthia D. Rivera

## Kin of Erap mistress charged with graft

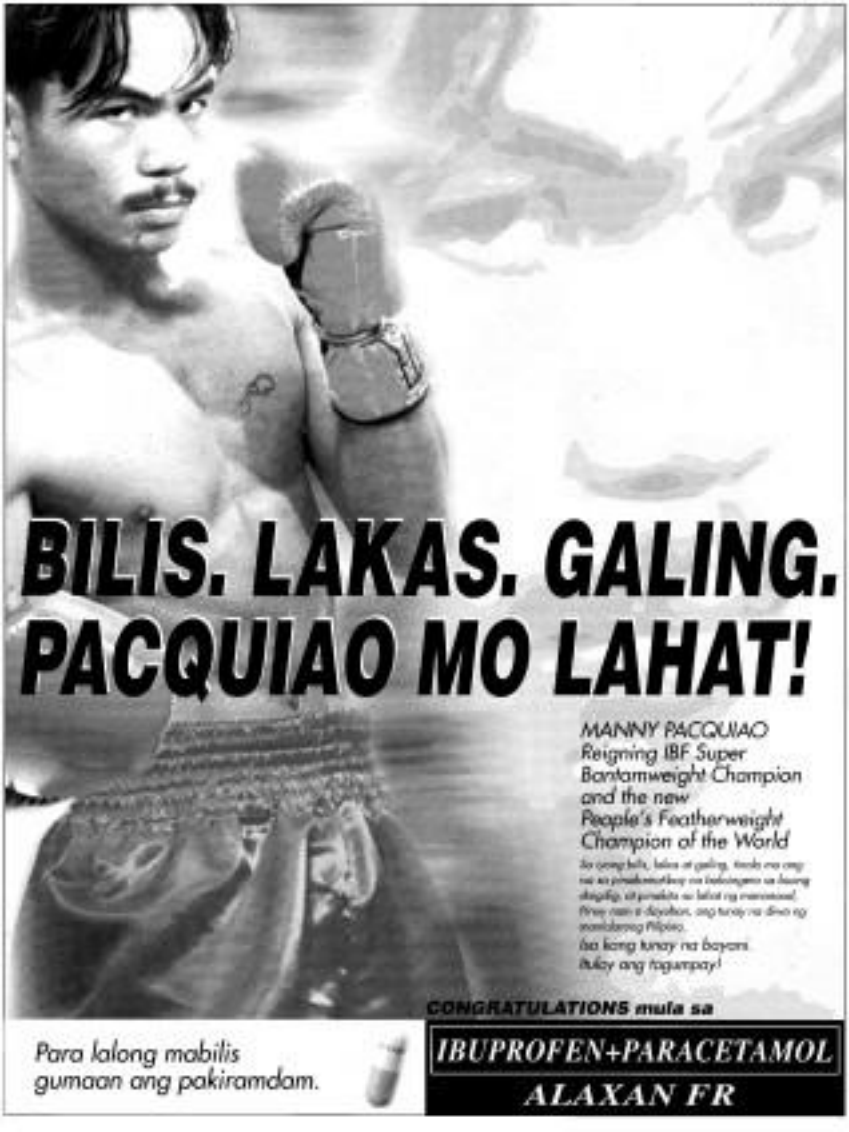
FOUR officials of the Jose Green of the Philippines led by its former head Dr. Perfecto Mendoza were recommended yesterday to be charged with graft before the Sandiganbayan for the purchase of a P2.4 million hospital bed in an alleged overpriced bidding.

In a statement, Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo said other charges include LCP bidding awards conspirator Saud Abdulcarim Ong, billing solicitor Bridget Abdulcarim Ong and Ma. Nicolas Torres and Arsenio Bautista of the LCP procurement property and supply division.

Mendoza is the wife of Joy Melendez, alleged former lover of ousted President Estrada, who is now on trial for plunder before the anti-graft court.

Marcelo said the complaint by former LCP deputy director Jose Pepito Antonio was meritorious and that there was "probable cause" to indict Melendrez and the other accused for the purchase of 98 hospital beds from the Philippine Medical Dental Specialist (Philmed) without bidding.

Melendrez denied the case as a "political persecution" owing to my closeness with a man I still consider as the President of the country [Estrada]" stressed Marcelo

# Twin loves, twin challenges of a labor lawyer

LAWYER Emerlina de Guzman

By Cecile G. Garcia

FOR Emerlina O. de Guzman, the practice of labor law is a coming together, a happy marriage between his love for human resources and his love for the legal profession.

De Guzman is a lawyer, specializing in labor law, and is the prosperous senior partner of the prestigious 40-lawyer, Gerampinis, Segubia and Cruz Law Office or LAGUBIA. According to him, his exposure to human resources or HR served as a springboard and prepared him for a career in labor law practice.

## Preparation

De Guzman, who has a degree in BS Psychology from the University of the Philippines, immersed himself in HR related work right after college. His first job was with the US Industries Phil., Inc. (USIPHIL) as an employment/ employee relations manager. In that post, he had the chance to deal extensively with people—an experience that has served him well.

When he moved to the National Housing Authority (NHA) later on, De Guzman decided to take up law at UE. It was there, he points out, that his career path became clearer and more focused. He was with the human resource management department of NHA when he passed the bar and subsequently applied at ACCRA. He says, "For a while, I thought of joining the government service, having prepared for a specialization." But, in the end, he opted for law, which had always interested him in the first place.

## Law office work

ACCRA took him in as a junior associate in 1983. For two years, De Guzman was handling litigation, corporate, special projects and labor cases. In 1985, Frank Dolino, (now Immediate) then head of the firm's labor department, invited the young lawyer to join his group. De Guzman looks up to Dolino and considers him his mentor, one who taught him to be fair at all times, to be compassionate.

"In labor, we handle all kinds of cases involving employer-employee relations," explains De Guzman. "These include social security, SSS, legal audit, administrative and arbitration/ arbitration, among others." There are 14 lawyers in the department. Four senior partners, four senior associates and six junior associates.

De Guzman was named senior associate in 1986 and was appointed member of the firm's labor department in 1988. Continuing to function as member of the labor group, he became a junior partner in 1990 and a senior partner in January of this year.

As member, it is De Guzman's job to review referrals (or cases) and to divide his group into teams. Each team is usually made up of three lawyers: a supervising partner, a senior associate in charge and a junior associate assisting lawyer who does the research and data gathering. De Guzman clarifies, "In complex cases, we could have more than three lawyers in a team. I supervise the progress of each case, and our group meets every week to review cases, especially critical cases."

## Value of excellence

Over the years, De Guzman has learned the value of excellence, putting a premium on a job well done. He says, "Exposure to various cases has given me the opportunity to grow. It has tested my creativity, my knowledge of law, my ability to apply this knowledge, as well as my ability to deal with people." He adds, "ACCRA asks much of its lawyers and gives back in equal measure."

The 51-year-old firm, which is made up of about a hundred lawyers, boasts of its meritocracy and is the perfect training ground for aspiring fresh law graduates. Says De Guzman, "When I joined ACCRA, I thought I should be a partner one day." But, unlike him, the majority cling not. Those who have intentions of setting up their own private practice later on, may settle the firm for a while to gain experience. In terms of perquisites, ACCRA is on par above most other local law firms. A team glance at its roster of distinguished alumni illustrates this. Among them are, Senators Franklin Drilon and Edgardo Angara, former Senator and DILG Secretary Raul Roco and Congressman Teddy 'Boy' Locsin.

## Winning, losing

Like most of his peers, De Guzman is motivated by the desire to win every case that comes his way. "Winning always gives me a high," he says. "I get the same kind of high from resolving a dispute, growing a strike or succeeding in CBA negotiations, because that says something of my creativity and compassion." But, how good a loser is he? "Ever you used to losing," he replies. "It's part of the game."

Though losing is a given, De Guzman said his group usually wins seven cases out of ten. "If the odds are against us, we try to settle," he discloses, stressing that it is important to be transparent with the client and to keep a cool head.

## Family life

Love is but one of De Guzman's passions. The other one is his family. At 47, he says there's not much else he can ask of life. He has been happily married to the former Ester Delatorre for 19 years and they have one son. De Guzman, who comes from Angeles, Pampanga plays golf as a hobby and enjoys sharing what he knows by giving talks, which he often invited to do. He's an active member of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP) and has served in its board of directors for several terms.

As this joins, De Guzman feels he can best contribute to ACCRA by doing his part to ensure that it continues to excel, particularly in the fields of labor and litigation. This means continuing to meet its high standards, keeping his integrity and setting a good example to the younger lawyers in the firm. With 16 more years with ACCRA to look forward to, De Guzman is confident that there is more than enough time for him to make a difference and to leave his mark.

CAREER TALES

# So you want to be a CPA

By Tibla Abuyuz

SKIMMING through the Classified Ads of a newspaper, you will discover the high demand for certified public accountants (CPAs). There is always a need for a good accountant. If one expects to keep a business afloat, accounting continues to be a popular degree program in universities, churning thousands of graduates each year.

But getting a diploma does not make a CPA; there is still the board exams to hurdle. CPA hopefuls spend months preparing ready for the grueling exams, brushing up on everything they've learned in school and trying to study all the materials that the exams cover. The exams require discipline. It is something you have to prepare for "physically, emotionally, intellectually, and spiritually," says Albert Bala, a CPA, top placer and now, SGV associate.

## Study hours

A serious CPA exam reviewee needs to set aside an average of 10 hours a day for studying, according to Board top placers. Jennifer Galang (2nd place, May 2003 Board Exams) shares that she spent about six hours a day studying. On the other hand, Thaniwa Abilla (3rd place, May 2000 Board Exams) estimates many reviewing 11 to 14 hours on weekdays, five hours of which were spent in review classes. Jonathan Chan studied for 16 to 18 hours a day. "There were a lot of sacrifices," he says. "I wasn't able to watch my favorite TV shows. I didn't go out with my family and friends as often as before, and I had to stay up very late."

After passing the board exams, the normal path is to join an accounting firm. The busy season, which runs from December to May, is naturally when CPAs are the most active. CPAs have to work, sometimes round the clock—depending on the urgency and degree of importance of engagements—to meet strict deadlines. The long hours of working together and common experience of dealing with clients and issues form strong, lasting relationships among CPAs.

## Accounting cycle

During the six other months of the year, however, the schedule is not quite so demanding. CPAs at SGV & Co. normally go through training during the off-peak season, apart from attending to regular seminars. In SGV, associates participate in a variety of well-programmed training sessions, not just limited to accounting updates. Many courses are geared toward the employees' personality development, ranging from business communications to self-marketing and effective presentations. The objective is to develop well-rounded professionals and equip them with skills needed in business.

Now firms can expect to do some field work for clients in various industries. They visit clients' factories and offices located in or outside Manila, where they may be required to stay for days at a time. "I remember my first job assignment in Iligan," narrates Garth Mark Ballesteros (9th place, May 2003 Board Exams). "I had to go back to the [SGV] office each night to do some more work since access to Iligan in the west morning. It was really tiring but after seeing my name written on the cover of the working papers, it felt fulfilling."

## Building relationships

Now CPAs will soon discover that accounting in theory is not entirely the same as accounting in practice. Sheila Go (10th place, May 2000 Board Exams) reflects, "Accounting in practice involves building relationships." Jeanelle Mendoza shares the same sentiment and adds, "It's even difficult because you have to deal with clients to get the information you need. In college, all the figures were given and all you had to do was analyze them." Now CPAs also acknowledge that they discover many new things as they go along. "I've been assigned to audit a bank and was shocked to learn about currencies. I've never heard of 'When Universal's bank offices' about a report I was assigned to do, it was an effort to keep up with what he was saying," reveals Galang. "Since then, I've been adding a lot of questions, and learning a lot too."

It may seem that the exhausting job overflows with many challenges, but CPAs believe that the occupation definitely has its share of rewards. "Most people look up to you once they know you're a CPA because they know that passing the board exams is no easy," says Mercedes Campana (2nd place, May 2003 Board Exams). "Being a CPA, in an auditor for that matter, has given me an with in-depth knowledge about different businesses." Diana Jane Barcos (2nd place, May 2000 Board Exams) observes, "Most people have a high regard for CPAs."

Being a CPA gives you a sense of pride. "It's a good feeling being a real professional," says Lagay, while John Paul Estrada shares that "the three letters appearing after my name make me feel that I achieved something really good."

Albert Bala, Jennifer Galang, Thaniwa Abilla, Jonathan Chan Lagay, Garth Mark Ballesteros, Sheila Go, Jeanelle Mendoza, Diana Jane Barcos, Mercedes Campana and John Paul Estrada are all passers in the May 2003 Board exams and are now associates of SGV & Co.

ICPAs and aspiring CPAs are invited to attend the 57th Annual Convention of the Philippine Institute of Certified Public Accountants or PICPA, which shall be held from Nov. 26 to 29, 2003 in Legazpi City, Albay. To register, call the PICPA Secretariat Office at tel. No. 721-2960 to 65 or email picpa@pacific.net.ph—RAW GG


The year is about to end. It is important that you are able to put in place all the tax and accounting requirements to maximize tax savings, avoid penalties for noncompliance of accounting and tax rules, and to minimize the risk of unanticipated financial reporting outcomes.

Knowledge Institute and SyCip Gorres Velayo & Co. (SGV & Co) presents its latest seminar on "Tax and Accounting Tips for the Year-end".

The topics and speakers for the seminars are:

TAX COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENTS FOR YEAR-END
by Atty. Antonio P. Bautista
Tax Senior Associate, SGV & Co.

TAX PLANNING CONSIDERATIONS FOR YEAR-END
by Mr. Joel L. Tan-Torres
Tax Partner, SGV & Co.

IMPACT ON YEAR-END FINANCIAL STATEMENTS OF NEW SFAS
by Mr. Gemilo J. San Pedro
Audit Partner, SGV & Co.

8:00 am - 12 nn
9 December 2003
Skylop
InterContinental Hotels Manila
Ayala Ave., Makati City

Know the latest developments from the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR), as well as the various reports (and the respective revised formats) that you have to furnish the BIR before the year-end or at the beginning of next year. Also, learn of the available tax planning options that can save you money if you do these before year-end.

On the accounting side, the Accounting Standards Council has issued additional and new Statements of Financial Accounting Standards (SFAS) that took effect this year. More SFAS are expected next year. These SFAS will change the way the information in your financial statements are prepared and presented.

Registration Form
Tax and Accounting Tips for the Year-end
December 9, 2003
Fee is: 4,000.00 (VAT Exempt)

Name: _____
Position: _____
Company: _____ Title: _____
Telephone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____
Signature: _____

Registration Fee: PHP4,000.00 (inclusive of VAT)

For inquiries, please contact Ms. Ailene Cruz at 636-0100 or cruz.ail@sgv.com.ph

www.sgv.com.ph

# RP to pull troops out of Iraq if...

[illegible] troops and humanitarian workers in Iraq will be pulled out swiftly if the threats to their security worsen.

"We shall closely monitor developments directly from the ground," Undersecretary Montejo said yesterday in a statement. "We will ensure that our nationals will be given adequate security and immediately evacuated if a decision by the ruling situation."

The Philippines and Mozambique were "continually assessing the security conditions in Iraq to sharpen our options."

Mr Montejo said earlier said the recent suicide bombings would not deter the government from sending more peacekeeping troops to Baghdad.

The Philippines has deployed 170 soldiers, police and humanitarian workers as part of a United Nations-led international force in occupied Iraq.

Mozambique promised the US-appointed Iraqi Governing Council last month that the contingent would be increased to 450 early next year.

But the security problem has escalated.

"We have to balance our international commitments against the safety of our men, peacekeepers and humanitarian workers," the President said.

# Judge facing harassment, Ping's camp complains

By Norman Bordadora

[illegible] opposition Sen. Panfilo Lacson yesterday faced the Senate committee on justice to investigate the alleged harassment of Quezon City Judge Ma. Teresa Dakudao by a police department after she ordered the Kuratong Baleleng police cops against the accused.

Lawyer Rufino Rodriguez, legal [illegible] Panglinan, who chairs the committee, conducted an investigation into Dakudao's claims that personalities identified with the government verbally harassed her with threats of administrative sanctions and investigations.

"There's something wrong if anybody in the executive branch of government would harass an [illegible]. The judiciary is the last bulwark of a democracy and a judge must be insulated from these kinds of pressure," Rodriguez said in a [illegible] to see to [illegible] by prosecutor.

"If Sen. Panglinan is sincere in doing his job, he should look into these allegations," Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez, however, did not identify those pressuring Judge after she handed down her verdict suspending Jocelyn Bituin and Mamerto Mallari after the latter dismissing the murder charges filed against Lacson and 19 others for the Kuratong Baleleng case.

"I have to guarantee that [illegible] a success for re-consideration of Judge Dakudao's decision. But, they should not subject her to threats of dismissal and other administrative sanctions," Rodriguez said.

Lacson's lawyer said Dakudao's decision should be read in its entirety before passing judgment on her alleged bias.

# Bite-sized news makes it big at 2

From page A1

135,000. Two years later, seven in bite-sized pieces, just right for commuters on the run are still available Monday to Friday—free of charge.

"We hope to keep it this formula," shareholder Pedro Roumeldes, Philippine Daily Inquirer president and chief executive officer, said.

"Libre helps keep people reading and informed. It gives service to the community," she explained.

### Where available:

Libre is a tabloid-sized English-Filipino daily published by the Philippine Daily Inquirer Inc.

It is given for free in the Makati-to-Taguig and the Light Railway Transit 1 and 2 systems.

Libre is also available in the arrival area of the terminal of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport 2 and the MRTA-Inquirer's newsstand of the Manila port area.

On top its launch in the Stations terminal of LRT 2, Inquirer publisher Isagani Yambot estimated that Libre is free of charge to encourage reading among the general public.

### Strong bond

Two years of reading has reportedly formed a bond between Libre and daily's growing commuters.

"The relationship between the reader and the paper is encouraging. And the commuters are just really the commuter because there is a personal one of at least five times," Roumeldes said.

She and members of the PDI board were initially hesitant to launch Libre given the economic difficulties the country faced in the late 1990s.

She said it was Dave Valdes, senior vice president for corporate services, who noted the emerging trend of free newspapers in cities to consider, after attending a conference in 1999.

### High risk

"It fully rely on advertisements for it because a newspaper is difficult. We felt that that risk was too high. The economy was not doing too well that time," Roumeldes recalled.

The idea was shelved until Roumeldes herself attended a conference of the World Association of Newspapers (WAN) in Hong Kong in June 2001 with Inquirer editor-in-chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc and managing editor Jose Soliven.

There, they got all excited about the possibility of publishing a free tabloid. It could be done, they said, and lost no time in making a mock-up of business Libre upon their return.

### Board approval

Also, feasibility studies were made when Roumeldes and company returned to Manila.

When the editorial group presented the Libre layout, concept and contents to the PDI board, it was unanimously approved.

"We knew it was risky (financially) but we felt also the need for us to provide something that would help encourage reading among the commuting public," Roumeldes said.

### Fast-food style

Roumeldes noted that the commuters targeted by the paper's free paper are not broadsheet readers.

The experience in the Wahl conference, she added, also made the business group see the opportunity to expand readership among those who are not natural readers of the parent paper.

Libre provides the non-readers a means to read up on the news fast-food style.

Roumeldes said four months of study eventually pushed the company officers to decide to take the next big step.

"There exists a non-Inquirer commuters that needs more value-for-money stories but this market does not have newspapers focus only in (on) them," Roumeldes said.

Libre, she said, is the response to "the need for more value-for-money stories" for a critical mass.

### Encourage reading

"We know it was risky (financially) but we felt also the need for us to provide something that would help encourage reading among the commuting public," she said.

"We were also keen on keeping a balance ratio between English and (Filipino) stories," Roumeldes added.

### Quality pics

One measure of how commuters react to Libre is the feedback received daily. Roumeldes is constantly updated about readers' reaction to Libre.

"People value high quality at a low price. Imagine how they respond to high quality that comes free," she added.

Two years after Libre's big gamble, Roumeldes smiled as she looked back to a risky project that has paid off, and how.

"It is more than I expected," she said.

Cathy Benesan

# Betti Sy UP summa cum laude graduate

From page A1

Its, a Chinese-Filipino who joined Coca-Cola Export in September 2000, had gone up the corporate ladder rapidly because of her diligence, Ibañez said.

Her death was a big loss for the company, he added.

She joined Coca-Cola Export initially as a business intelligence officer, became finance manager a year after and was appointed commercial finance director in September last year.

"She was one of the smartest persons you'll find here," Ibañez said.

### Only girl

The eldest of six children and the only girl on that, Betti was said to be the apple of her father's eyes and was always a darling aunt.

"She would take her (six nieces) shopping and always ran to the malls and was even planning to take one of them to the United States," Ibañez said, quoting one of Betti's grieving brothers.

"I have no bullets all over her, so I just hope that she had passed out before she died so it would have been less painful for her," Ibañez said.

He also said he hoped that investigators would not rule out as the prime evidence that would lead to the most frivolous and capricious of the perpetrators.

This developed as her body was found wrapped in a blanket and stuffed in a trash bag.

"She is the latest in a long list of similar cases and we hope she'll be the last. She's a very sensitive person and she'll take with her (she'll be the last)," Ibañez said.

### Consistent achiever

A consistent achiever, Betti finished her BS degree in Business Administration at UP in 1991 and completed her MBA at the same university in 1997.

After graduating from college, she began her career as an account officer assistant at the Philippine Commercial International Bank (now Equitable PCI Bank). Betti became assistant general manager of Mendoza&Sy Enterprises Co. from 1991 to 1997. She then ventured into investment banking, joining BDO Private Properties Inc. as an assistant manager for corporate finance in 1997. She was finance manager of brokerage house BDO Builders Properties Securities Inc. until September 2000.

According to Teresita Ang-See of the Citizens Action Against Crime, Sy was looking forward to studying at the Wharton Business School of the University of Pennsylvania.


DLI GENERICS

Quality na gamot, sa presyong mas abot!!!

Suggested Retail Price October 8, 2003

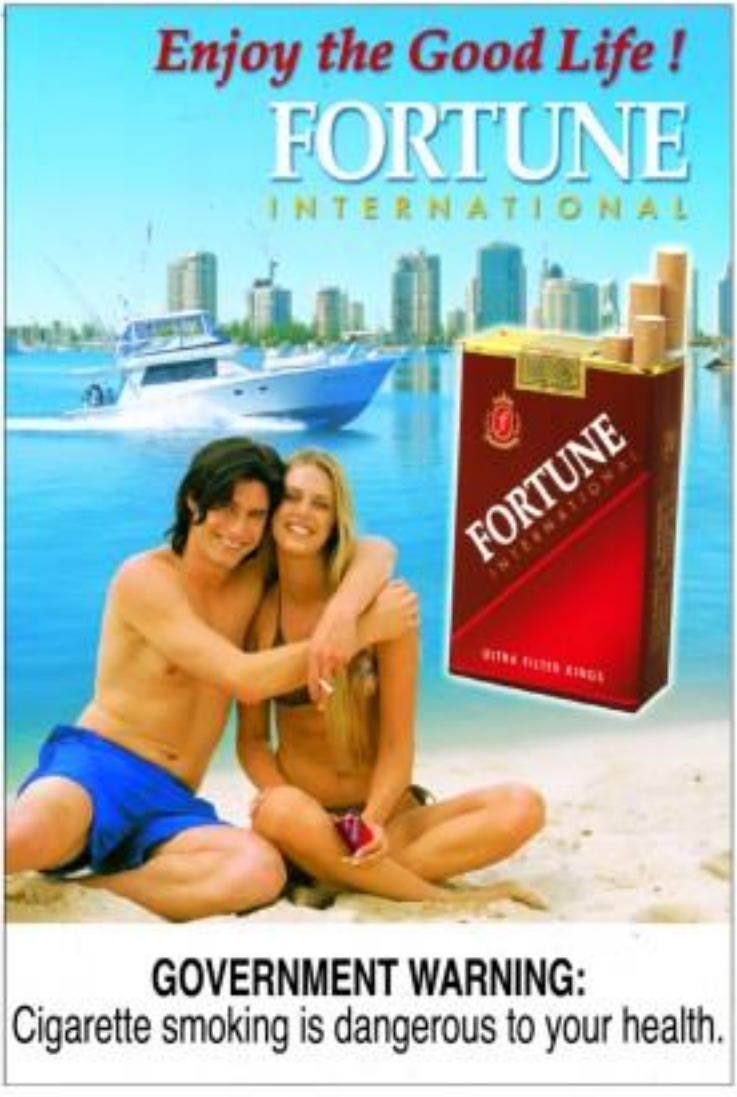
| | DLI | Leading Brand | Savings |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Analgesic/Antipyretic** (Para sa lahat, lagnat o sumpong sa ulo!) | | | |
| Mefenamic acid cap. 250 mg/5 ml susp. | 10.00 | 124.00 | 114.00/bot |
| Mefenamic Acid tab. 500mg | 3.00 | 15.00 | 12.00/tab |
| Paracetamol syrup 120 mg/5 ml 60 ml | 72.00 | 83.00 | 11.00/bot |
| Paracetamol tab 500 mg | 0.75 | 3.00 | 2.25/tab |
| **Anti-biotic** (Mabisa laban sa mikrobyo!) | | | |
| Amoxicillin cap. 250 mg | 3.00 | 8.00 | 5.00/cap |
| Amoxicillin cap. 500 mg | 5.00 | 15.75 | 10.75/cap |
| Amoxicillin+Sulbactam 250 mg/31.25 mg/5 ml | 47.00 | 89.75 | 42.75/bot |
| Amoxicillin+Sulbactam 500 mg/62.50 mg/5 ml | 89.00 | 144.00 | 55.00/bot |
| Cotrimoxazole cap. 480mg | 3.00 | 8.75 | 5.75/cap |
| Chloramphenicol susp. 125 mg/5 ml 60 ml | 41.50 | 164.75 | 123.25/bot |
| Co-trimoxazole syr (TM 100mg/5 SMX 400mg) | 2.00 | 16.00 | 14.00/tsp |
| Co-trimoxazole tab. (TM 80mg SMX 400mg) | 2.00 | 14.00 | 12.00/tab |
| Co-trimoxazole susp. (TM 40mg/5 SMX 200mg) | 25.00 | 115.75 | 90.75/bot |
| **Anti-cough** (Para sa Ubo) | | | |
| Bromhexine HCl syrup 4 mg/5 ml, 60 ml | 35.75 | 74.75 | 39.00/bot |
| Carbocisteine cap. 500 mg | 3.00 | 12.00 | 9.00/cap |
| Carbocisteine susp. 100 mg/5 ml, 60 ml | 46.75 | 91.50 | 44.75/bot |
| **Anti-diarrhea** (Para sa Pagtatae) | | | |
| Loperamide cap. 2mg | 1.00 | 10.00 | 9.00/cap |

Save as much as 80% ! Available at the following & all leading private outlets:

WATSONS EMELENE PHARMACY Cooper SUPERDRUG Rose Pharmacy

No Br. 171-8800, 713-4366, 716-9312 Visit www.DLI-Generics.com for complete product & price information








2 BIGGEST REASONS WHY YOU SHOULD BUY YOUR SPLIT AIRCON FROM A SPECIALIST...

OVER 100,000 FEET INSTALLED

10,000 HORSEPOWER SOLD

PLUS 7 MORE REASONS...

1 LOWEST UNIT COST
2 LOWEST INSTALLATION COST
3 LONGEST UNIT WARRANTY
4 LONGEST INSTALLATION WARRANTY
5 WIDEST RANGE OF PRODUCTS
6 WIDEST BRAND SELECTION
7 COMPLETE AFTER SALES SERVICE

VISIT or CALL:

TOTAL AirconCenter, Inc.

THE SPLIT AIRCON SPECIALIST

850-9641 • 850-9679
807-4957

# The WORLD

Lira Lorraine B. Garcia

# Italian official quits, slams coalition

BAGHDAD—An Italian member of the US-led coalition has resigned, accusing the Bush administration of inefficiency and failing to understand Iraq, he Tikrit, US forces killed six alleged insurgents as they pressed their search for a former Saddam deputy believed to be orchestrating attacks on Americans.

Before quitting, Marco Calamai, a special counselor of the Coalition Provisional Authority in the southern province of Dhi Qar, criticized L. Paul Bremer's administration for its handling of Iraq. The changes come as Rumsfeld and Bremer objected to the US timetable for handing over power to the Iraqi by July 1.

Ruling casualties added new urgency to the task. Three American soldiers died Monday—one in an ambush on a patrol, another by a roadside bomb and a third from a non-hostile gunshot wound.

Earlier Monday, US-led troops smashed dozens of suspected guerrilla hideouts as it intensified the search for Izzat Ibrahim al-Douri, No. 6 on the most-wanted list of 55 Iraqis and former vice chair of Saddam's Revolutionary Command Council, US military spokesperson Brig. Gen. Mark Kimmitt said.

For a second straight day American troops fired a satellite-guided missile with a 227-kg warhead on Monday, this one at a suspected insurgent sanctuary 15 km south of Tikrit, Saddam's hometown.

They continued attacking suspected insurgent positions late Monday with mortar and tank fire, US military officials said. Sporadic explosions could be heard overnight as more Tikrit residents fled there were no immediate reports of casualties in the US attacks.

"Clearly, we're sending the message that we do have the ability to run operations across a wide area," said US Lt. Col. William MacDonald. "We have overwhelming superiority over those we will strike at or go after groups and individuals who have been conducting anti-coalition activities."

In Rome, the Italian foreign ministry confirmed on Monday that Calamai had resigned but gave no reasons.

In an interview with the Milan daily Ulisse, Calamai complained that the British and Americans had marginalized the Italians. "They don't consult us, they don't involve us."

Calamai said only an interim authority headed by the United Nations could ease things around.

He told Italian reporters in Nasiriyah on Sunday that the failure of the coalition to understand Iraqi society had created "delusions, social discontent and anger" among Iraqis and allowed terrorism to "easily take root." He cited that overall result: bombings at an Italian paramilitary garrison in the city, which killed 19 Italians and 14 others.

Calamai said about 8,000,000 a month was supposed to be made available for projects in Dhi Qar province alone, but "because of this muddled organizational of [the coalition], only a fraction has been spent." AFP

## Asian gov'ts worry about troops in Iraq

BANGKOK—Asia-Pacific governments have pledged to keep their troops in Iraq, but the escalating violence, new al-Qaeda threats and growing public opposition are beginning to cause divisions in the US-led coalition.

Until now Australia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, South Korea and Thailand have insisted they will not withdraw despite indications the security situation is spiraling out of control.

But last week's Istanbul bombings which left 19 Italian police dead, and al-Qaida's threat against US allies Britain, Italy, Australia and Japan—including an explicit warning to Tokyo not to send troops—is testing their nerves.

Public resistance to the deployments has been rising in step with the mounting death toll—more than 300 US soldiers have been killed since May 1 when US President George W. Bush declared major hostilities over.

On Tuesday the first serious crack in resolve came when President Macapagal-Arroyo of the Philippines—a steadfast US ally in the region—said troops would be pulled out swiftly if their safety was threatened.

Japan was expected to send an advance party of 150 troops by the end of this year, followed by another 550 in early 2004, less a day after the Istanbul bombing it stood down its pledge on the first score.

Even before the attack the prospect of a deployment were dimming, with opinion polls showing 71 percent of Japanese people are in favor.

Thailand has also seen fiery debate over the deployment of more than 400 troops, including engineers and medical teams, to the central city of Kerbala, and exile from the Democratic Coalition Government.

Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra has rejected the demand and insisted Thai troops are safe, but a military envoy will go to Iraq this month to assess the conditions amid growing public concern over their safety. AFP

## 2 Israelis die in West Bank

JERUSALEM—A Palestinian gunman, his rifle wrapped in a prayer mat, walked to a West Bank checkpoint and killed two Israelis at close range Tuesday just as Israel's Cabinet was debating a proposal toward a truce and a quick Israel-Palestinian summit.

In the Gaza Strip, troops raided a refugee camp, setting off a gun battle that wounded nine Palestinians, one critically.

It was not clear whether the renewed fighting would jeopardize Egyptian-led years of efforts. Egypt proposes that Israel halt military operations in the West Bank and Gaza Strip and that Palestinian militant groups stop attacks on civilians.

In the past, Israel has rejected such proposals, saying it would only stop military strikes if Palestinian security forces crack down on armed groups. However, the Egyptian mediators, meanwhile, that Ehud Sabbagh, said Monday he had received positive signals from Israeli officials.

Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon said he would meet his Palestinian counterpart, Ahmed Qureia, "in the coming days." It would be their first summit meeting since Qureia, widely known as Abu Ala, took office more than a month ago.

In Tuesday's shooting, a Palestinian attacker, his rifle wrapped in a prayer mat, walked toward a West Bank checkpoint and opened fire, killed one Israeli and critically wounding a second who died en route to the hospital. Soldiers fired at the assailant who sped away in a get-away car, security officials said.

Israeli Justice Minister Tommy Lapid said a truce would only work if the Palestinian security forces were serious about stopping such attacks.

"We want to give Abu Alaa really if he is honest about stopping attacks," Lapid told Israel army Radio. "What happened this morning places doubt on this honesty ... Right now it looks like talks about a ceasefire are premature."

Sultan Abu Luteih, a Palestinian Authority official, said the Palestinians were working hard for a truce. "We are striving for a situation in which there won't be attacks and there won't be occupation, there won't be Israeli pain and there won't be Palestinian pain," he told the radio. AP

**SWORN IN**
Arnold Schwarzenegger, who arrived in the United States 31 years ago as a bodybuilder dreaming of fame and fortune, takes his oath of office as governor of California on Monday on the steps of the state Capitol. He says he is ready to take on the "monster weight we owe (in office) our state." REUTERS

# US sniper convicted of murder

HERNDON (MACH), Virginia — In a verdict that could send him to his death, a mute-faced John Allen Muhammad was convicted of using a high-powered rifle, a hand-up car and a teenage sidekick to murder people at random and terrorize the Washington area during last year's sniper attacks.

After Monday's verdict was announced, the jury immediately began hearing evidence on whether the 42-year-old Army veteran should get the death penalty or life in prison. The penalty phase is expected to last several days.

"We reserve the death penalty for the worst of the worst," prosecutor Richard Conway told the jurors. "John, he is the single evilest of practitioners of terrorism."

Muhammad stood impassively as the verdict was read, looking straight ahead with the same impassive look he had throughout the trial. Two letters held hands, and two others wept. Family members of victims held hands and wiped away tears.

Prosecutors presented evidence of 16 shootings, including 10 deaths, in Maryland, Virginia, Alabama, Louisiana and the District of Columbia that they said were part of a plot to extort $10 million from the government. Prosecutors say that during the sentencing phase, they also plan to present evidence of a killing in Washington state.

The jury deliberated for 6 1/2 hours over two days before convicting Muhammad of four counts of capital murder. One accused him of taking part in multiple murders, the other — the count of a post-Sept. 11 terrorism law — alleged the killings were designed to terrorize the population. Muhammad is the first person tried under the Virginia law.

Muhammad was found guilty of killing Dean Harold Meyers, a Vietnam veteran who was car-jacked by a single bullet that hit him in the head on Oct. 9, 2002, as he filled his tank at a Manassas gas station. He was also found guilty of conspiracy to commit murder and use of a firearm in a felony.

The victim's brother Sidney said Muhammad deserved the death penalty: "I must say that I can't think of one many more heinous crimes than this one."

Million suspect Lee Boyd Malvo, an 18-year-old native of Jamaica, is on trial separately in nearby Chesapeake for the killing of FBI analyst Linda Franklin at a store in Falls Church. He also could get the death penalty. Malvo's attorneys are pursuing an insanity defense, arguing that the young man had been "indoctrinated" by Muhammad.

The sniper trials were moved some 220 km to southeastern Virginia out of concern that it would be too hard to find an impartial jury close to the nation's capital because the sniper attacks had terrorized so many people.

The verdict came after three weeks of testimony in which a series of excuse and other witnesses graphically — and often tearfully — recalled the horror that gripped the Washington area.

Jurors also saw several chilling, crime-scene photos, despite protests by the defense that the pictures were gruesome.

Ten people were killed in the region and three were wounded in the spree, many of them shot as they went about their daily tasks shopping at a strip mall, buying groceries, mowing the lawn, going to school. AP

## WORLD BRIEFS

### Japan-Asean security ties

TOKYO — Japan will sign a security pact with the Association of Southeast Asian Nations, its chief government spokesperson said. Japan has decided to sign the 37-year-old Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia, chief Cabinet secretary Yasuo Fukuda was quoted as telling reporters after Asean members wrapped up two days of meetings in Tokyo to finalize the agenda for a Decembe summit expected to call for free trade and closer security cooperation. The treaty is a legally-binding agreement whose signatories pledge to respect the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of one another. AP

### Rumsfeld urges self-reliance

OSAN AIR BASE, South Korea — Fifty years after the Korean War, an economically vibrant South Korea can more afford to rely less on the United States for its defense, US Defense Secretary Donald R. Rumsfeld said Tuesday. His question and answer session with US troops, Foreign and South Korea had the 12th largest economy in the world. "It is time for them to set a goal for becoming somewhat more self-reliant," he said. There are about 37,000 American troops in South Korea, and the United States is planning a consolidation of bases that is likely to result in some troop reductions over the next several years. AP

### US warship in Vietnam

HO CHI MINH CITY — After nearly three decades of recriminations, self-analysis and anger, the United States will turn the page on a bloody chapter in its military history Wednesday when a US Navy frigate docks here in the first port visit since the end of the Vietnam War. The four-day port call by the USS Vandergrift to the former South Vietnamese capital of Saigon, now called Ho Chi Minh City, comes a week after Vietnamese Defense Minister Pham Van Trà made a landmark trip to Washington. It was the first visit by the head of the communist nation's armed forces since the United States was forced into a humiliating evacuation out of Vietnam on April 30, 1975, when the US-backed Saigon regime crumbled. AP

### Out-of-touch 'thugs'

JAKARTA — Indonesian President Megawati Soekarnoputri on Tuesday lashed out at members of her own party, calling these "thugs" who are out of touch with voters — an apparent attempt to rein in corrupt cadres ahead of elections to her reelection in 2004. Public dissatisfaction is growing with Megawati's Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle or PDIP. Critics say she has failed to keep her promises to curb graft and bring economic benefits to the poor since she took office two years ago. AP

### Foreign-trained bombers

ISTANBUL — Turkish media on Tuesday named and published photos of four foreign-trained Turkish Islamic militants they said were involved in the suicide bombings of two Istanbul synagogues that killed at least 25 people. But police held back from formally declaring the four as suspects until DNA testing of video-cassette was completed. Newspapers said three of the men's bodies mutilated bodies were found at the scene of the car bags and the fourth was missing. Reuters

### Twins' ongoing saga

CHILLIN — Six-body conjoined Egyptian twins are undergoing the spy and are on hold to have their skulls rebuilt in January if all goes according to plan, doctors said Monday. "This is an ongoing saga," said Dr. Kenneth Salyer, the craniofacial surgeon who founded the non-profit World Craniofacial Foundation that is to begin the boys in Dallas in June 2002 to be evaluated for separation. The 3-year-old boys joined at the top of their heads were evaluated Oct. 13 during a 24 hour surgery at Children's Medical Center Dallas. AP

### Mexico envoy quits

MEXICO CITY — Mexico's UN ambassador will step down at the end of this year, bowing out of President Vicente Fox's government after saying the United States treats this country like a "carpet." Foreign Secretary Luis Ernesto Derbez said on Monday Derbez submits hastily organized news conference to announce that Adolfo Aguilar Zinser would leave office effective Jan. 1, but it was unclear whether the ambassador-at-large turned to step down or was forced out by Fox's government. "I've had a series of meetings today with Ambassador Adolfo Zinser, invited him to present the reasons for his statements," Derbez said. "We then have of this, and conversations with the president, the decision has been made that he will conclude his duties." AP

SPORTS

Editor Teddyboy S. Peñaredondo
Assistant Editor Edwin M. Villanueva

PBA REINFORCED

# Knockout games today

SAMES VIDEO (Philsports Arena)
4 p.m.—Talk 'N Text vs Red Bull
7:30 p.m.—Coca-Cola vs Shell

RED Bull Barako will stick to its original game plan while Coca-Cola hopes to summon enough energy against their respective opponents today in a pair of sudden-death matches in the Samsung-PBA Reinforced Conference at the Philsports Arena.

The Barako evaded the Talk N'Text Phone Pals, 99-90, and the Tigers downed the Batangas Giant Kings, 83-77, last week to force a decider in their respective best-of-three quarterfinal duels.

The Red Bull-TNT clash is set at 4 p.m. with Coke facing Giant at 7:30.

The winners advance to a best-of-five semifinal showdown beginning Friday. The other semifinal pairing will pit San Miguel Beer against the winner of the Sta. Lucia-Barako knockout game this Friday.

"We're a very hot team. I hope we could have the same energy when we face them (the Kings) in Game 2," said Coca-Cola coach Chot Reyes.

Red Bull Barako mentor Yeng Guiao, on the other hand, said he would stick to the strategy that allowed the Barako to force the do-or-die encounter with the Phone Pals.

"The burden of adjustment, goes back to them," said Guiao of the Phone Pals, whose offensive production was reduced by at least 10 points in Game 2.

Both coaches, however, agree that Sta. Ana, the lanky cut on a rebound play and diving for loose balls in gain possession, could make a lot of difference in Game 3.

"It's a matter of which team could do the little things and play harder. We got outrebounded in Game 1 but we matched them in rebounding in Game 2. It will again be the key in this game," said Reyes.

The Barako limited the attack of the Phone Pals to 11 in Game 2 from 29 in Game 1. They also prevented the Phone Pals from adding open shots.

TAGALOG

"They shot well in Game 1 and we have to give them credit for that, but this time we're not going to give them those kind of shots because I have this feeling that it's going to be a low-score outfit the past two games," said Guiao.

A key factor for the Gins is the lackluster performance of Ronnie Ella. The Gazelle import dubbed all-Star two of his 14 free throws, including six straight in the final 6 minutes.

"But I guess the difference will depend on how we battle them off the boards. It will determine the outcome of the series," said Reyes.

For Guiao, the shooting factor would be their dialogue on Kid Tordesa, Dennis Canon-ay and the Phone Pals' backcourt led by rookie Jimmy Alapag, Yeng Severa and Derrick Pumaren.

Jayvee Hernandez

## Fash nips Welcoat; Viva posts 1st win

SAMES VIDEO (Ynsa Sports Center)
1:30 p.m.—Alaska (0-1) vs Coca-Cola (0-1)
3:45 p.m.—Welcoat (0-1) vs Barangay Ginebra (1-0)

KIKO Alvarez and Peter John Simon came through with big baskets down the stretch, rescuing Swatting Bank Liquid Detergent to a 82-81 win over arch-rival Welcoat Paints in the 2003 PBL Philippine Cup at the Ynsa Sports Center.

Alvarez, a two-time UAAP MVP scored on a layup with 37 ticks left off two Welcoat defenders to shatter a 81-81 count.

Welcoat guard Enid Arnaiz, bounded by Eugene Tan, intercepted the next play allowing Simon, the rising star from Mabalacat, Pampanga, to put the final score with two free throws off Willy Wilkott's foul, only 4.0 seconds left.

The win preserved the home team's slim 5-4 lead in the second quarter where he hooked nine straight points to give Bank a 34-28 lead.

It was only the second win in four starts for Fash, the Sunkist Lady Cup titlist.

In the other game, Viva Minerals' Yancy Jamil Bautista (2/2, 7/7-FT, 15 pts) improved to 1-2 in a tie with Bataan's LBT and RCTM-La Salle.

Despite the loss, the Petal Masters remained on top with a 2-1 card.

The 5-foot-8 Asarre scored 18 points and had 10 rebounds, six of them offensive, as Viva chipped in 11 points.

Scores

First Game

**BEAR BB**—Asarre 18, Sison 11, Jang 10, Mercado 6, Salangsang 4, Arellano 4, Rivera 2, Gonzalez 2, Tan 0, Bandonill 0, Dadia.

**WELCOAT** (0)—Yap 20, Wilson 20, Mendoza 6, Capati 6, Reyes 4, Angeles 4, Pingol 3, Bello 2, Pablicomo 2, Tungcay—Cuan 0, Rebano 0, Cruz 0.

Quarters: 20-14, 38-31, 58-52, 82-81

# Top fighters want to face Pacquiao

By Sylvan L. Lagumbay
Correspondent

MANNY Pacquiao has suddenly found himself besieged with several offers to fight blue-chip fighters, a situation the Filipino ring idol could have dreamed of only a month ago.

Pacquiao's status as new world boxing sensation got another boost Monday when he was installed No. 9 among the world's best pound-for-pound fighters by the No. 1 boxing website Maxboxing.com, the battling Mexicali-ring genie Mario Antonio Barrera in the 11th round of their 12-round, non-title bout last Sunday.

Another Mexican boxing hero, Erik Morales, yesterday openly smoked a fight with Pacquiao, saying it would "be good and if he wins, even better."

However, a possible Morales-Pacquiao tiff depends on two things.

First, Morales has yet to hurdle a scheduled bout with WBC junior lightweight king Jesus Chavez next year. Second, if he beats Chavez, Morales is not interested in going back in the ring after a shattering title loss, but hints at "something in between" before he makes a decision.

That means a proposed bout with Pacquiao would have to be at a contract weight of 126 lb. which many say may favour the Filipino, who had to add three pounds to his normal fighting weight of 122 for the duet with Barrera.

Also yesterday, top promoter Bob Arum declared his protégé ward, WBA/IBF bantamweight champ Jean Manuel Marquez, as the new double-weight boss, "who will take on one of the leather-weights."

A bout between Pacquiao and Marquez would be easier to hold as both boxers fight under HBO. And their crowd-pleasing styles make for a truly exciting encounter.

Then, there's Peoples super bantam champion Paulie Ayala, who had earlier expressed interest in banging with Pacquiao.

"I would like that fight," Ayala was quoted as saying moments before the Pacquiao-Barrera faceoff. HBO boss Kery Davis is reportedly thrilled at the possibility of making the Pacquiao-Ayala showdown.

But Pacquiao won't be fighting until March next year, says his business manager Bud Nazario, saying his ward is content to a long rest after his rigid preparation for Barrera.

Pacquiao and his handlers are slated to arrive in Manila later Friday, then proceed to the Manila Hotel where he will be warmly welcomed by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, a long time Pacquiao supporter.

On Monday, Pacquiao will pay a courtesy call on President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang after a caravan starting in Makati City.

PACQUIAO

## SPORTSWATCH

### Filipino GM robbed in Belgium

CHARLEROI: Rising Filipino star Joel Mercado, the junior composite scorer each and other valuables while riding a train with fellow GM Jony Antonio going to the Brussels International Open in Belgium recently. According to Dinky Jimenez, Secretary of the Cyber Chess Cafe where the 20-year-old Villanueva is the lowest GM and lowest-rate, a passenger told Villanueva that his jacket is dirty. This prompted Villanueva to put his jacket on the floor, along with his laptop and bag. Only after did he notice that the passenger was gone and so were the things. Referees and Villanueva competed in the 10th round of the open chess where they finished second and tied to fellow Filipino GM Eugene Torre. Meanwhile, Woman GM candidate Antonio Del Castillo and Woman IM Cristine Rose Marbon-Inocencio will be the Philippine entries in the double-rate of the round individual event in the coming 22nd Southeast Asia Games to be held in Vietnam.

Ed Morfe Jr. and Jay Jimenez

### Boter stuns Ngo, gains 3rd round

DENMARK: Jude Boter stunned wife-rounded Ms. Angelica Ngo, 7-1, 8-4, converting to three consecutive victories in the end of the P500,000 Philippine Colombian Association (PCA) Open Tennis Championships at the Philippine Columbian Association (PCA) Tennis Center. Boter will face Judy Ellis and Michelle Prado, who finished second and fourth in Group A, 6-0, 6-0, in other matches. No. 2 Filipina Lalay-Jimenez Silvia Macarrus, 6-1, 6-2, in advance against Annie Jade Perez, 6-0, 6-0 in winner over Nanette Mabanta while No. 3 Ben Chiam outplayed Shanty Mercado Chiam, 6-4, 7-5, 6-2, to advance against No. 10 Karen Flores, who beat No. 9 Isabel Soriano, 6-4, 6-4. Fourth seed Lara Gallardo-Lopez defeated Carmina Mae Gonzalez-Lacson-Lim-Magsaysay, 6-0, 6-2, to forge a third-round meeting with Hazel Tanate.

### Spring posts 1st NBL victory

SPRING: Cooking Oil Star Pulido held King Haus Andersons to a career in the last two minutes to take out 63-59 victory Monday in the 2003 Philippine National Basketball League Reginald Cup match at the Ninoy Aquino Stadium. Alvin Pinto led the Star Pulido with 19 points, three rebounds and two assists, including a crucial 3-point play that sparked a 9-0 run down the stretch to secure. Sterling Alan Valdez for its first victory in three outings. Carmelo Delmonte-Donnie Clay rebounded in the last 10:00 seconds to turn back Everready Tagaig, 76-72. Tagaig threatened in the closing stanzas but Clay's jumper with 1:00 left in the game sealed the victory. Ron Gonzalez muffled an attempt in the last 20 seconds to allow Clarin to escape with its second win in the season, sponsored by Panasonic, Sil Star Logistics, Solar-on Lines, Weber and Nature's Spring.

### National Rallye Series Saturday

THE SEASON-ENDER of the 2003 Shell National Rallye Series, the Petron Gasul Rallye, will be held in Subic Olongapo City, on Saturday. The 20-stokes up for grabs in the Petron Rallye Pilipinas is expected to crown the fight race. Team Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VIII Subaru Impreza WRX will battle it out with Toyota Celica GT-Four and Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VII for the overall and WRC-10 honors and are expected to be the favorites to win the Petron Rallye. Other contenders include the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA) Rallye Team of Ricardo Arroyo and Ernesto Gamba. The Jaguar Brothers team invited their fellow members in the National Drivers Association (NDA) and Kias to make the most a popular occasion. Actual action is set to start at 8:00 a.m. in Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Weigh-limits are from 7:30pm 2:4 kg. Barry Borromeo

### 'Bakbakan' resumes at Big Dome

THE LAST elimination round of the "Bakbakan 2003 National X-Ring Derby" will resume today at the Araneta Coliseum with more than 300 marksmen on line. Eight categories at 25 m. Standard Bullseye's will participate in the elite list of contenders who will vie for trembling and exacting experience in this event. 10 and 20 and the three levels in the 2000s, also at the Big Dome. Submission of weights for the Nov. 23 semifinals is set for Nov. 21. Jose P. Rizal at the Makati Office of Araneta Coliseum. For details, call 911-2909.

### Executive run fires off Dec. 7

DUBAI: I will hold its 10K Canada Executive Run on Dec. 7, 6 a.m. at the SM Mall of Asia Complex. Organizers announced Monday that the run will highlight the 10th anniversary of the Executive Runners Club (Runners Philippines). Runners president Ben Lopez said the races are limited to executives, professionals, businessmen and corporations of the Alliance Corps. All Pesos/Mall supports and shows, 25 years old and above. For inquiries, contact Runners secretariat at 31-1 Go Chuan at 3988-0788; PAL Mango Engineering, Mary Antonio Arena at 8522-8326, 868-6000; Ferry Engineering at 311-8150; Sun Communications at 832-7512; and Lara Sarmiento at 571-4445.

### Paul Harris Cup at Southwoods

THE PAUL Harris Cup will be held at the Manila Southwoods on Nov. 21. Big prizes are at stake including a new Mega Commander van, a Honda Civic, a trip to Hong Kong and a Mitsubishi L300, one where. If the Rotary Club of Makati Ayala is host of the event as well as other notable projects such as Project Rosario and Pedro Plus. Supporting this event are Metro Pacific Corporation, Meralco and Asian General Insurance as well as Global, Taylor Made-adidas, Reader's Digest, Sunrise, Meridian Limos, Mail Boxes, Etc., 700 Plaza, 700 Plaza, Bank of Commerce, Jaime Hernandez, American Express, Powerade, Abbott Laboratories, Planter's Bank and PT.

### Holiday Hoop Challenge slated

MANCHESTER: Courts and Sun Miguel All Stars project director Eric Altamirano will stage the "Courts and Sun Miguel All Stars Holiday Hoop Challenge" basketball competition beginning with coaching and skills clinics on Dec. 12, 2003 to Jan. 4, 2004. Altamirano said the inaugural staging of the event will bring the premiere participants to the next level in the sport and will be an answer to the much needed grassroots development program in the country. The tournament, organized by the Philippine Basketball Training Center (PBTC), features the 12-and-under and 14-to-16-year-old divisions. A total of 200 teams for the two brackets are expected to register. Interested parties may contact the Greenhills Sports and Entertainment (525-65-05).

CEREMONIAL SERVE

The first Manila Badminton Tournament Executive Cup kicked off recently at the Pasay-town Badminton Center in Pasong Tamo, Makati. Photo shows Manila Philippines Vice-president for tournaments Eugene Dee (2nd from left) with Manila executive director Arnold manager Bobby Alcantara, Manila competition manager Lyan Gonzaga, and former sports commissioner and Sydney Olympian Monica Lim (extreme right) making the ceremonial serve. A total of 33 teams are competing action in the event sponsored by Manila, Sportshoes, Acid, McDonald's, Mom Mom, Donut's Rockwell, Clemson and Dumplings, PLDT, Home BP-1 and Nivea.

# U-Bix Pro-Am tees off at Riviera

By Jong Arzaga

MOST of the big names in the local professional golf are in the field of 120 teams, but there is historical luster for the title those to be declared as wire open on the past ongoing Riviera Golf Estate Terrace of the P1.2 million U-Bix National Pro-Am golf championship. Kicking off today at the Lanyar course of the Riviera Golf and Country Club.

With cold paintings coming out as winners in the early years of the

BERT Bravo, chair and CEO of U-Bix, hits the ceremonial tee off.

pro-am event divided due to a balancing scheme that double-checks the handicaps of the pro-am tandems to play with scratch players, brothers like Connie Casas, Boyle Magsaka and Richard Bidango have found it hard to make it to the top.

Two years ago, Nik Rempis and Erwin Wahas were among the largest show to the pairings but emerged as winners. Last year, brothers Raul and Fred Mijares were not among the seeded lists but brought the championship trophy with them to their hometown.

This year's pro-am ...are even more where the members of the team in their show chemistry—is expected to be another four-day battle of solidly swinging fairways as the pros share for cash in what should be their last chance for big money this year following the continued postponement of the Philippine Open.

According to reports, the Open has been tentatively set by the National Golf Associations of the Philippines for in January or February. Unless it will be held next month, it would mark the first time since the last World War that Asia's oldest tournament is not staged during the year.

Up for grabs is a top prize of P150,000 for the winning pro out of the cash pot put up by the sponsoring U-Bix Corp. The runners-up get P75,000 and the third placer P45,000, with prizes scaled down to the 30th finisher and less.

The sentiment of the top three teams also get prizes in the form of gift certificates. First prize is worth P45,000, second P27,000 and third P15,500.

# Regrets after the sensational knockout

BARE EYE

*Barak Trinidad*

LAST Sunday, the mighty, magnificent fists of Manny Pacquiao exploded like fireworks that lit up Philippine skies well ahead of the Christmas holidays.

While his heroics touched off instant celebration here at home, Pacquiao's Toto Gozon escaped the long list of fan-fan Antonio, Texas had a moment of unspeakable grief for the caning of Marco Antonio Barrera, the overmatched, vanquished opponent.

Barrera relatives and supporters openly cried tears.

As it would turn out, Barrera was incapable of facing up to a flashbomb blitz which was packed with the potential for that defining moment in his young career.

The only way Barrera could have survived was to slow down, step back, shift to the reverse gear.

Unfortunately, the Mexican ring idol was not so equipped, and was therefore reduced to mindlessly punching bag by Pacquiao's relentless onrush.

The successful strategy kept a score by Pacquiao prior to the big fight, was confirmed by Cebu fight chronicler Salvon Lagumbay yesterday.

Reported Lagumbay who kept to close contact with the Pacquiao camp in the run-off to last Sunday's classic—"In my Pacquiao and Freddie Roach had instructed him to go to the body, and put Barrera on the defensive because the latter doesn't know how to fight moving back."

All the greatness Barrera had assumed in his cultured, but otherwise well-protected career had gone up in smoke, ruined by an invasion from the Philippines who fought with the inconsistent rage of California wildfire.

***

Anyway, next to Barrera, the guy who got it rough is no other than the Golden Boy himself, Oscar de la Hoya, whose outfit had planned to make that Sunday main event a prop to a next major promotion.

Words filtering in from those who had observed De La Hoya's immediate reaction would confirm the fact that the Golden Boy was shocked to the core by the classic punishment dished out by Pacquiao, an awesome undercut following the straight, magnificent fists of Pacquiao which sent the Mexican idol sprawling to the canvas in the 11th round of their 12-round, non-title bout last Sunday.

Another Mexican boxing hero, Erik Morales, yesterday openly smoked a fight with Pacquiao, saying it would "be good and if he wins, even better."

However, a possible Morales-Pacquiao tiff depends on two things.

First, Morales has yet to hurdle a scheduled bout with WBC junior lightweight king Jesus Chavez next year. Second, if he beats Chavez, Morales is not interested in going back in the ring after a shattering title loss, but hints at "something in between" before he makes a decision.

That means a proposed bout with Pacquiao would have to be at a contract weight of 126 lb. which many say may favour the Filipino, who had to add three pounds to his normal fighting weight of 122 for the duet with Barrera.

Also yesterday, top promoter Bob Arum declared his protégé ward, WBA/IBF bantamweight champ Jean Manuel Marquez, as the new double-weight boss, "who will take on one of the leather-weights."

A bout between Pacquiao and Marquez would be easier to hold as both boxers fight under HBO. And their crowd-pleasing styles make for a truly exciting encounter.

Then, there's Peoples super bantam champion Paulie Ayala, who had earlier expressed interest in banging with Pacquiao.

"I would like that fight," Ayala was quoted as saying moments before the Pacquiao-Barrera faceoff. HBO boss Kery Davis is reportedly thrilled at the possibility of making the Pacquiao-Ayala showdown.

But Pacquiao won't be fighting until March next year, says his business manager Bud Nazario, saying his ward is content to a long rest after his rigid preparation for Barrera.

Pacquiao and his handlers are slated to arrive in Manila later Friday, then proceed to the Manila Hotel where he will be warmly welcomed by Manila Mayor Lito Atienza, a long time Pacquiao supporter.

On Monday, Pacquiao will pay a courtesy call on President Macapagal-Arroyo in Malacañang after a caravan starting in Makati City.

Pinoy knew in the complaint, sent in by Jo Ming Henderson Sze:

"Last Nov. 4, the Lipa City Tennis Bowling Association secretary Heidi Mendoza was served spoiled food with maggots at the Carousel Grill, Plaza Mall, Lipa. Two other members experienced intestinal disorder and diarrhea several hours after eating. Carousel management wanted to settle amicably with us when they learned we went to file complaints with the city health's department. A date was set for a meeting. Representatives from Plaza Mall invited him and were very apologetic. Maybe they suspected we were after money. But all we wanted was a simple apology. We just felt terribly betrayed being served rotten food when we were their No. 1 customers. Plaza Mall is almost home to most of the LCTBA members. Carousel Grill is the restaurant in the bowling alley. It is safe to assume that majority of their income comes from us, members of the LCTBA who are mostly doctors, nurses and businessmen. Spoiled food had actually been served to some of our members before but no complaints were made. Just appease us may and no refuge. When we agreed to talk and settle, they were no show representatives, the restaurant manager, human resources manager and a staff. They were late but, instead of saying sorry, they wanted us to go to the Mall for a shoddier check-up. But relax! You will not see anything in food poisoning especially after 48 hours. Besides, we are doctors. When we said we would put report to the city health's department, they claimed the health officer had cleared them. The representatives, sounding very arrogant, dared us to file charges. When we checked with the city health department, we learned that their place was really dirty, manifest rotten refuge. The employees have no health documents. Now, this pr-ing guild is seen because we told our members to stop dining there."

OK, there's nothing they could do about Barrera's fall. But let's hope Lipa City mayor Vilma Santos is able to mark out something unsavory and healthy for her constituents.

ISSN 0115-2542 PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER VOL. XXVI, NO. 344

# OPINION

Publisher Isidro Tuason
Editor-in-Chief Letty Jimenez-Magsanoc
Managing Editor Jose Ma. D. Hilario
Associate Editor Benjamin E. Dumlao
News Editor Andrew T. Fontanilla Jr. – Chief, News Desk Paul E. Pacuno
Opinion Editor Joseph F. Abcede
National Editor Philamer B. Bautista Jr.
City Editor Gene Lim
Senior Desk Editor Rosario E. Garcia-Ong
Editorial Consultant Rhoda Dominguez
Chief Photographer David Santiago
Art & Design Director Lucy N. Pujalte

Board Chairman Marixi S. Prieto
President Alexander Prieto-Gonzalez
Senior Vice President for Sales and Marketing Roberto R. Romulo
Senior Vice President for Corporate Services Rene O. Vilches
VP for Advertising Felipe B. Duazo
VP for Circulation Elmer P. Lumbreras

All rights reserved. Copyright in all articles by the owner of the Philippine Daily Inquirer. Copying, republication or distribution of any of its articles by any means whatsoever is prohibited without the prior written consent of the publisher.

## Indictment

**EDITORIAL**

THE PHILIPPINES' failure to have Red Streak convicted to face charges that he was behind the 2001 Nida Blanca murder had been determined since the start. It was determined by sloppy investigative work by the Philippine National Police (PNP) and the National Bureau of Investigation (NBI), the evasiveness of self-confessed killer Philip Medel that Streak was the mastermind, and the incredibly stupid move in 2002 by NBI Director Reynaldo Wycoco to press ahead with the charges against Streak despite having nothing but Medel's original deposition and a host of circumstantial evidence that were more coincidental than circumstantial to buttress an already flimsy case.

The case has been flimsy since the time the murder was discovered. The PNP failed to secure the paramounts of the crime scene. The car where Blanca's bloodied corpse was recovered was washed of all traces of the killing. Photographs of the actress' body on the mortician's table circulated among the tabloids; obviously they had been leaked or given to media cronies of the police.

When Medel surrendered to authorities, he graphically described how he bludgeoned Blanca to death. Could he be saying the truth or merely fabricating it all up? As a fall guy or a media hound, could he have described the killing convincingly with the aid of the photographs leaked to the tabloids? We don't know.

What we know is that Medel, after owning the crime and pointing to Streak as mastermind, was presented to the media with much fanfare by the PNP, and that on the day of the preliminary investigation with the Department of Justice, broke down and confessed he had made it all up because he was tortured and forced by the PNP to do it.

The PNP pressured Medel without first firmly establishing his identity or even corroborating his confession. The flasco on Medel then had been predetermined from the start because of the PNP's penchant for pandering to the media and the public. Not surprisingly, the PNP had fawned "Task force Martha," referring to Blanca's chauffeur in the sixties "Juba ex Martha," to solve the crime. Clearly, the PNP is more adept at these biz, not investigation.

The show biz-like way was employed by Wycoco when the NBI took over the investigation. Wycoco, who has displayed time and again a penchant for self-promotion, even held daily press conferences last year to report on the progress of the investigation. As any student of criminology knows, this hardly makes for an ideal environment in which to conduct an investigation. Intense media attention merely reflects intense public interest in sensational crimes. It should not be allowed to color the resolution of a case, the sourcing of clues, the sifting of evidence, the identification of suspects, the very course of the investigation.

Above all, it should not be used as an excuse to lower the constitutional standard governing a fundamental civil liberty: every person's absolute right to be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

It was Wycoco, complete with makeup, who transposed "CASE CLOSED" when the NBI filed charges against Streak last year, basically repeating the PNP yarn that was built up from the shifting sand of haphazard investigative work and an inordinate penchant to conduct criminal inquiry under the media spotlight. It helped Wycoco's triumphalism that Streak, who had been given the clearance to go to the United States to be at the bedside of his sick mom, had chosen to break his promise and stay there for good.

Since the US justice system, presumably a more competent system, case that is less prone to show biz, has ruled that the government does not have the goods on Streak. And the way the government has reacted to Streak's victory against his extradition does not in any way assure the American justice system that if extradited, he would be treated fairly here. As Streak's Philippine lawyers have been saying since the start, the PNP and the NBI have succeeded in smearing Blanca's husband before the bar of public opinion. He has been so painted as the irredeemable villain in this episode that it would be suicidal for him to come back here.

Thus, the US decision is an indictment of our criminal justice system. It exposes what many of us have known all along: we have tweetlegirons who love building show biz-like task forces, not airtight cases.

## Neighbors quarrel due to gov't neglect

**As I See It**

*Neal H. Cruz*

HOW ironic that the government, which is supposed to promote peace on earth, goodwill to men, is actually causing ill-will and even court suits among neighbors because of negligence and dereliction of duty. In exchange for the taxes the people pay, the government, local and national, are supposed to provide police protection, maintain the roads, provide street lighting, collect the garbage and develop and maintain the parks. But they don't do that. They just collect and collect but don't give back to the taxpayers the services that they are supposed to give. As a result, the people have to fend for themselves.

Those with their homeowners' associations (if they have any), the residents pay for security guards, road maintenance, street lighting, garbage collection, park development and maintenance, drainage and beautification and other sundry services. Where do they get the money? From homeowners' dues, which include contributions here and fund-raising activities.

Many associations, with officers serving gratis and often spending their own money, besides raising funds from various sources, barely make both ends meet. If not used to the task at the end of the year because of the many hats worn among the homeowners, refuse to pay their monthly dues while enjoying the services provided by their association, thanks to its more generous members.

One common source of irritation among neighboring villages is the bad habit of subdivision developers and the business of local governments in allowing it—of using existing roads of adjacent subdivisions as entry points to their new subdivisions. In turn, newer subdivisions connect to those subdivisions, thus benefiting from the improvements in roads of subdivisions ahead of them.

In due time, subdivisions nearest a public street look like two a map or how the air's one with the trunk (the main street) dividing into many limbs but leading to the other subdivisions. With so many vehicles from neighboring villages using their main streets, they soon become clogged with traffic and the residents subjected to noise and air pollution.

How these main streets were not designed to serve residents but without as much traffic in the first place. So they soon break down. But the government doesn't repair them. So who does? The homeowners' associations. Where do they get the money? From those who use the roads, naturally.

They do this by selling vehicle stickers to those who use the roads regularly (with residents of their own village and neighboring ones. The stickers are both for road maintenance and security, for the identification of residents and neighbors. But even here, there are righteous folks refuse to pay.

The private security guards—to whom fully 80 percent if the associations' collections go as salaries and allowances—are needed mainly for security. Still, burglaries often happen in some villages. In two neighboring villages in Quezon City, two families have been traumatized in their own homes; nobody has been convicted for the murders. In both, security guards have been shot by intruders. Villages with many gates connecting to neighboring villages or with spacious colonies are only more vulnerable.

Violent crimes have increased and demand protection from their homeowners' associations because they're not getting any protection from the police.

In self-defense, the associations close some of their gates during the wee-hour, from midnight to 5 a.m., when residents are all supposed to be already home in bed.

Residents in affected villages protest and court suits begin. Neighboring villages don't like their ingress and egress closed. But they don't like to share in the payment for security guards in equal duties guard 24 hours a day, either. They want all the privileges and conveniences but none of the responsibilities.

But what can the village owners do public streets—through which the vehicles of its neighboring villages pass—do to protect itself? Close its most vulnerable gates during the five hours after midnight that few pass are most active. And that is when neighboring villages ask the courts to keep the gates open so as not to inconvenience them.

The courts are faced with a dilemma: problem: for they decide in favor of the right of residents to protect themselves, or in favor of the right of passage of neighbors, during the five hours of curfew, 20 hours (by what residents) are most in danger?

The courts have to be very careful here, for in upholding the rights of one side, the rights of the other side may be trampled upon.

As I see it, the right to passage of neighbors who use the streets of somebody else's village—tourists of the residents of that village—is not absolute. It is still subject to reasonable rules promulgated by the association to protect its members. The argument that they paid for vehicle stickers issued by the host village and therefore has a right to either free passage, 24 hours a day, is not justified. The right to pass through somebody else's property is not a right but only a privilege. A privilege is subject to the conditions that the host may impose.

For example, if you allow a neighbor into your own house temporarily, he cannot do anything he wants in his share. Politicians threaten that he believes decently inside the home of a person who is kind enough to let him in. Even in school or movie house or restaurant or any public place where patrons pay a fee, they are still subject to rules imposed by management.

## Just like Edsa

**THERE'S THE RUB**

*Conrado de Quiros*

THE ONLY thing there that left a not very good taste in the mouth was GMA interrupting the broadcast of the Pacquiao-Barrera fight on Solar Sports Nov. 9 to congratulate Manny Pacquiao. Well, there was no other thing that left a very bad taste, which was broadcasters fit from being a little too obsequious. "I understand Mrs. President," he said, "that you led the action in praying for Pacquiao." Well, who the hell cares if she did? She is the President, she ought to. Pacquiao won by grit and spit, not by his President's call for divine intervention. Prayers, questions, or indeed come-ons, are an open invitation to a campaign patch.

Or a more elaborate one. The interruption was already a campaign patch. The significance of having a picture taken with the champion and new belt here of this country. Some friends of mine were far less competent in their reaction, being particularly incensed that their President had replaced the saving of the official announcement of Pacquiao's victory by interrupting the fight. Others were less incensed and the interviews that normally followed such a fight. Malacañang figured right that if the President congratulated Pacquiao after everything was said and done, nobody would be second to blame. But they figured wrong that if she came in the middle of the fight, she'd be pleased with it, or trust it with equanimity.

Some of my incendiary friends went on to shout: Pacquiao's name like a kapampangan—with the "f" instead of "p".

Otherwise, it was an unbroken treat on a Sunday afternoon. Like Hector Rivera, I too gave Pacquiao very little chance to win. My heart went out to him, but my head went out to Marco Barrera. Barrera was the wise money. He had more experience, more skills, and, as his record proclaimed, more chin. And he was fighting on his chin. Pacquiao was counting up. Joaquin Bernas reminded the question for everybody's mind when he asked Al Mendoza, after Al had pointed to Pacquiao's captains left hand as his key to victory, if that replacement would still be there traveling from human to featherweight.

The question was soon answered.

It only because of the odds Pacquiao was backing, just being able to stay on his feet would already have been money. Earlier in the week, Pacquiao trainer Freddie Roach's comment that he Filipino handlers were disrespecting him by agreeing to his getting only a $150,000 purse. One that left him a lot poorer after taxes and the cut that went to his people. Family, friends said, Pacquiao deserved a million bucks, same as Barrera. His record argued so. He wasn't a race his fighters. He was every bit a worthy challenger, and deserved total treatment—not least in the financial respect.

Pacquiao's fans would add to that argument. He not only stayed on his feet, which were too fast for Barrera they seemed like, but he also very piled up points, which he deposited to the cash limit their fists Jose Midel, he gave Barrera a beast to boxing. Pacquiao's domination of Barrera was so complete, his display of skills so manifold, it was easy to behold—if you were a Filipino. It was almost unfair, as one big commentator put it. If you were a Mexican, as indeed most of the spectators in the Mandalay were, "we further reason to stand to rose as Pacquiao's accomplishment.

Boxing is a cruel sport not only in that it punishes the body most grievously, it is so in that it reveals the soul most mercilessly. Barrera had destroyed the spirit of his opponents in the past by that very same route, by beating them apart bit by bit and leaving them with nothing. And now there was Pacquiao doing the same thing to him. Again the ring comment-

tator was right to wonder what would the left of his warrior spirit afterward. In the end, it wasn't the blood rusting down Barrera's left eyebrow like a bloody tear, it wasn't the gash on his nose that leaped up in his eyes and the bruises that with which he went back to the fight after he was cut. At that point, you knew you were looking at a beaten man.

But by the same token, it is a sport that rewards the lion-hearted abundantly and ensures the soul most lofty. If you were a Filipino, you could not but thrill to the sight of the undoubting Pacquiao, when no one gave a chance to win, being carried aloft on the shoulders of his cornermen, his fans raised to triumph, tears streaming down his face. If you were a Filipino you could not but exult at the quickness and the words of praise that trembled from his way the diminutive fighter now striding like a titan across the world. It was like Edsa all over again, the much-abused and lowly regarded Filipino doing the near impossible, justifying his way back grossness armed with heart and spiritual talent.

Of course, like Edsa, you also wondered if Pacquiao would not rise to a moment of redemptive unity to call to an enemy of characters to be united abundantly and ensure the way. If he would not scale heights of selflessness in order to forget the depths of dark hate on. Which is the eternal lure of the Filipino, the inability to contain things.

But that thought came and went in a flash, like the blur that was Pacquiao's fists in Barrera's face as he fell down. For the moment, it was the age of Flash Gordon once again. The nation being a most worthy successor to him. For the moment, centuries had brought us to a nation full of daring-and-derringers, dubiousness and despair, and made its inhabitants feel human again. For the moment, it was Eddy and Christmas and other things all the same to celebrate of angels singing (Sandel's "Messiah" all rolled into one.

Forget all the other candidates, someone texted me, Pacquiao for president! No, I replied. Pacquiao for king!

# Reconciliation overtures

ANALYSIS

*Amando Doronila*

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's call for "total" reconciliation with a broad spectrum of political forces, including the left, found its mark not only on target—despite President Joseph Estrada. The unrelenting peace offer was like casting a net in rough seas. It was only with Estrada that the peace feelers were unzipped because there was something special in an offer addressed to a man who had been, at the time, in detention.

Estrada's persistent request that he be allowed to seek medical treatment in the United States for his injured knee.

The prospects of reconciliation with groups like Edicon the Cojuangcos in and the Marcos family are dim. The presidential peace facilitator, Bishop Fernando Capalla of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines, has not even made contact with any of these groups and besides the President has given out the hint that "the battles are still raging" on the peace front. Capalla says that "the party who expresses interest first will probably be tackled first." Since this approach is no more than fact finding or exploratory, there is no reason to expect that either Cojuangco or the Marcoses would respond immediately to reconciliation moves that have no agenda of negotiable items.

Except for the case of Estrada, negotiations are under way with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front and negotiations with the Moro National Liberation Front have gone on and off. In both cases, issues have been identified, so reconciliation has a basis to move ahead without wandering in the dark.

Negotiations with Estrada are pretty well advanced. The administration has gone beyond to the point that allowing Estrada a politically expedient. It has indicated that it may not block moves by Estrada's lawyers with the Sandiganbayan, seeking permission for him to go on medical treatment. The court has gone so far as to say, for "humanitarian reasons," it would leave the call to the court and it would provide security for Estrada.

The administration calls on initiatives "principled reconciliation." The adjective is a contradiction in terms. The softening of the government's position on Estrada's plea, like nothing to do with principles. The last time it was principled, political moves intended to buy domestic peace for an embattled government and a President whose chances of being elected are, according to multiple terms, diminishing day by day as we approach the May 2004 polls.

The administration appears to be heeding to the growing clamor by political pressure groups with large political constituencies—such as the El Shaddai-led Iglesia ni Cristo—those representations for his going abroad for the most humanitarian reasons has acknowledged.

It is uncertain whether Estrada will keep his promise to return home after completion of medical treatment, or whether he will be pliable at the Sandiganbayan will be completed before the May elections. Estrada has advised his supporters in a strong memo to his peace on the Intramuros case. Since the administration has just emerged badly damaged from the siege of the Supreme Court by the forces of Cojuangcos Antonio Trillanes IV's coalition in Congress—a thesis of time that has forged the "rainbow coalition" between the NPC and the administration's Lakas party.

The administration has been traumatized over the past few months by a series of political crises, beacon including the siege of Oakwood by young officers led by Trillanes, the Manila Peninsula takeover by Trillanes and the Supreme Court's declaration that Estrada regains assistance. The administration has also been traumatized by the publication of coup plot reports in the press, and the recent unruly demonstrations on Ayala Avenue, blamed by security agencies on followers of the Cojuangco-Trillanes. The demonstrations were harangued by well-known Estrada sympathizers.

As the "rainbow coalition" in the House, cobbled by Speaker Jose de Venecia, stands on the verge of collapse—as Lakas' allies in the House—particularly the Liberal Party—are sparring over the basis of the coalition's alliance with the NPC, and are pressing the Speaker to break off with NPC, the President certainly needs relief from all these developments.

Reconciliation is not, with Estrada out of the center of controversies swirling over his head, the President could deal with her other adversaries one by one. Estrada still has a significant political constituency among the urban poor. It is believed that a demonstration of humanity by him could at least calm this constituency and forestall their being used as recruitment ground for other anti-government political actions.

Estrada is making noises of being receptive to the administration's reconciliation overtures, perhaps sending signals that he could make things less difficult for the administration if it facilitates his departure with the Sandiganbayan. All that the administration can get from buying peace with Estrada's constituency is temporary relief. This does not mean that the administration in 2004 will be enhanced by Estrada's absence.

A lot of things will depend on a number of factors—first, whether other fronts on the anti-Macapagal coalition will be drawn into no-harm agreements with the administration. And the second, who will be the opposition's official contender for the presidency, assuming it can form a "united opposition." The President is taking a big gamble on Estrada's departure which cannot be made as a guaranteed deal for any arrangement with Cojuangcos or the Marcoses, who are facing a number of criminal and civil cases in the courts, that cannot be compromised by backroom accommodations for political convenience.

# Men need protection, too

AT LARGE

*Nina Jimenez-David*

GOING A TALK early this year by Dr. Alicia Ilacqua of the University of California San Francisco on the dangers of the male condom, I was astonished to learn all the research aimed at developing "woman-controlled" contraceptives, it was still worth investing time, effort and money to develop contraceptives for men. Ever since the development of the pill some 40 years ago, we've heard periodic reports about the possibility of coming up with a "male pill," which seems to be the "Holy Grail" of medical research.

Dr. Ilacqua explained that while she believes it's still in women's best interests to be in control of their fertility, she also believes that "it should not be the right to decide if and when he becomes a father." While using a condom or getting a vasectomy are options open to men, she said, "I think that men should be willing to use these methods—in which the same way men tell women would want to get a tubal ligation or use a female condom, for the "male pill" remains an attractive option.

Dr. Ilacqua explained that this research even should also be promoted against unwanted pregnancy was now to me, but it did make sense. Men, too, have the right to know if a single natural intercourse would result in a pregnancy and deny them the right to be the parent they want to be when they feel they are not ready for fatherhood.

Society has always viewed pregnancy as a woman's burden, and an unwanted pregnancy as a woman's "punishment" for illicit, premarital sex, the consequence of a moment of lust a man can be just as much a "victim" of the situation as is, of course, the child that results from it.

* * *

ALL this is by way of reflecting on the constitutionality of a story that, on the surface, is nothing but juicy mass-tea chismis.

In last Sunday's "The Buzz," there was a story about a boy whose mother claims was fathered by unsung actor Rhett Bellamy Bernardino. The mother's story is that while she studied as a public relations officer on the movie "Sinibuyas," she and Bernardino had a one-night stand that resulted in her pregnancy. She made no demands on the actor, she said, and would not have gone public with her story if the authorities in a Catholic school in Recoleto had not demanded that the boy have his files listed as "unknown" in the birth certificate, acknowledge his paternity, a brother of the woman, who spoke to the "Buzz" even said they had already talked to Bernardino but that they had not heard from him for over a month. Then the "revelation."

A "Buzz" reporter interviewed Bernardino who confirmed that he had yet to see a picture of the boy. At that, he was invited to watch the videotape about this mother's story and was a picture of the purported son—who did indeed bear some resemblance to Bernardino. But it was painful to watch Bernardino's reaction, a mix of confusion, nervousness, guilt, pseudo-macho—all recorded for posterity.

* * *

THE REPORTER kept asking Bernardino if he felt any financial attachment to the boy or "false ng dugo," as the vernacular term goes, no instant bonding or declaration of paternity. And my sympathies went out to him as he tried to negotiate his way out of a murky situation: deny paternity outright and he would be painting himself as a cad, acknowledge paternity and he might be opening the door to a host of problems, not the least support for a boy who might or might not be his son.

I guess the intent of the story for both Pedrosa and the boy's mother would be not paternity but financial support. But I wonder if it is necessary to be that mean, not to be responsible sexual behavior, that while it's only women who get pregnant, unwanted fatherhood, especially when you find out about it out of the blue, is also a loss of control.

That there were numerous hour for wine bottles. I noticed that wine bottles come in a variety of shapes, colors and sizes but never knew each had a specific name: Nyuks, Chiquitos, Fibelle, Elegantes, Marie Jeanne, Double Magnum, Jeroboam, Rehoboam, Imperial, Methuselah, Salmanazar, Balthazar, Nebuchadnezzar and Melchior. Most of the names remind me of the Illuminati or the Bible though since Cooper and Jeff Bridges were seen in the show last night and are not book-reading by name.

The book also reminded me of the late L. Aguilar Cruz who would spend hours at his typewriter trying to conjure Bridgetbarbie stereotypes for each letter of the alphabet. Everyone who took typing lessons learned "The quick brown fox jumped over the lazy dog." But there are more of these sets most useful for book designers looking at fonts. Try these sentences out.

1. Fragile explorers trek lavish feral ice, jumping to outback frogs. He promptly judged antique ivory buckles for the next prize. Sixty zippers were quickly pulled from the woven jute bag. Jump by vane cowgirls, lazy strength in Oxford.

2. Pack my box with five dozen liquor jugs. Every key in the board staining with sporty. Then three very pallid dancers or vessels and glasses that used the same backwards. After Cruz also spent hours figuring these out when School's "Monolithic" could not be found in the "Yellow Pages."

Could this a dare, either by Guy Rhodan, to Miss Ty Adam. Shy a moody baby doom a pan? Do gyrate me rude? Murder by a jar of red nun. Never odd or even. Strain, excellent cry invisible sustain? Dryness: I am God. He knows now Natasha. Some men interject more than others. Sex with me, I proved to me few, drawn entered to a new end. Too bad—I hid a knee. A man, spleen, a canal. Banana.

Now I still have to compile a similar book with Philippine references.

* * *

Comments are welcome at ninadj@philanet.edu

# Evacuation days

TUAFAI: what they feared would be a horrible life in war-torn Irlanda and at the urging of relatives who had migrated to other earlier, my mother sold the family house and her drug store in Sta. Elena and "terminated." The natural disaster felt on Basay as my mother succumbed to those relatives' beguiling descriptions of the region as the land of plenty consequently living in a nation that knew considerable from the freedom of war experienced by my peers in Manila. We lived a humble existence, powered by the trusted Stinbern-petrolite and sustained by the dense forest of the mountains of Tarlungbu. I recall with fondness the low stairlines of images that remain with me, but that period when I was a toddler. I find, however, that every year, my memory of that life diminishes with age like the bodoy sad that recedes from the shore and disappears into the sea.

We lived in a two-story frame house within walking distance of the railroad station. Our household consisted of my mother, her 56-year-old father, my older brother and a younger sister, two teenaged cousins, a maid and my sister's niyo. My father passed away this year before, which is why my memory of him is completely blank. The major report I have about my father is that it was my father who lifted mine colcon and my mother explained to us that at that time, she could not get her hands on either penicillin or a continuous supply of the antibiotics and resented for his survival.

From the window of that house, I saw my first evacuation: the vast of Basay residents fleeing the town of my mother's friends, also migrants from Quezon. One day, the roar of airplanes punctuated by deafening booms that I have learned was gunfire, shattered our quiet morning. No one knowing that the sounds meant danger, I instinctively scooped up my one-year old sister and ran under a table in the living room. So my old under the table, I grabbed a stuffed animal nearby and gripped it over my head to reinforce my shelter. So focused inwardly for a while and when my grandfather passed that it was safe, he coaxed his sixth out the window to watch the waning roar of the airplane. When he sighted it, he pointed it out to my sister and said, "Look, Lourdes, Japanese!" Moments later, our entire household was leaving out the windows, sneaking in the semi-silence a joint procession of two bloody pallets bearing the lifeless bodies of the one-year old sister and my grandfather. Only then did I learn that we were trying to understand and feel the unwanted presence of the Japanese Imperial Army and that the boys' father was a suspected guerrilla leader in Basay.

Opposite our house stood the stately, federal style post office built by the Americans in the 1900s and taken over by the Japanese soldiers who made it their headquarters. Every morning, after my father's departure, Japanese troops, the soldiers would bathe in the bare torso, oblivious of passersby and the eyes of a curious 5-year old.

From this house, we took flight in the company of several families from the town to seek refuge in the mountains of Tarlungbaka. My memory of the trek begins as I was walking with Ate Lucy, the younger daughter of another family. She was leading me by the hand as we walked over rough undulated paths uneven with meridian dung. Several times, she helped me scoop under the barbed wire fences of strategic farms. At some point (it might have been mid-day), she and I were left behind by the rest of the family and started trying to do hungrily searched a vast swelling tree to see his mouth from a jackfruit that he held with his legs. I felt very sad and I wanted to cry along with her. Somehow, we must have been fed and we continued our trek. Today, one of the locales I recall is a wooden bridge over a river big as she was. It contained remnants of my mother's wedding gifts like a soup tureen and other kitchen utensils.

I don't know how long we walked but my memory catches up with me when we were settled on the estate of Mr. Serapio, the largest landowner in that region. My mother, who subsistently tipped than the other and a number of fruit trees, occupied the spacious compound. The smaller house was near a creek, on the other side of which was a sugar cane field, where we used to eat sugar cane to our fill. There was also a farm house where we were allowed to pick up eggs. Mornings, I would watch with fascination the hens' bottoms as they laid eggs.

Aside from the time when I saw my sister crying, I never again saw anyone suffer from hunger. The water had enough rice and fish for the families encamped there, as well as coconuts, bananas, corn and sugar cane right under our feet. In addition, we were allowed to trade items and to help ourselves with any fruit we could find. Sometimes, we ate so many guavas that we ate our teeth on edge and made ourselves sick to the stomach.

The bamboo when a period was available and the guerrillas deemed it was safe, we would have Mass in the large house, after which we would walk to the nearby river for a picnic lunch. Rice and the ubiquitous adobo, as well as bananas and other fruits, would be spread on banana leaves and we would eat sitting on boulders with the cold stream rushing around our ankles.

The only violence I can remember one of my playmates who got too close to Mr. Fernandez's pet, a monkey that was ordinarily on a horizontal bamboo pole in the middle of the yard. She was playing catch and in her excitement the girl stepped into the monkey's territory. The monkey ran to her and grabbed her hair and the two were involved in a tug of war. The girl was screaming her lungs off to unsuspecting herself, while the monkey salivated at the prospect of the rich feast of her in the girl's hair.

Although food was adequate, clothing was not. Underwear, specially panties, were scarce. The most common fashion for girls was a dress made out of a sack. A more inventive fabric-made from abaca. It was embarrassing to be known for wearing panties: panties or girls kept it a secret. Unfortunately, word somehow leaked that one of my female cousins' cousins was wearing panties panties. That was all it took for the entire town to know that she was wearing an unutilized that she promptly disappeared. We finally tracked her down (or up) perched on a branch of a mango tree, hiding behind its thick foliage. By nightfall, she was still adamantly refusing to descend from her hideout; only when assured that panties were not all that it was being worn did she agree to come down.

Finally, it was time to return to town and resume our life. One day, my mother dressed us in our Sunday best and brought us to a friend's house near the municipio to watch a ceremony in the plaza. I saw two flags on their respective poles and felt the excitement of the large crowd as they sang. Just I had no idea what they were singing about.

Violeta Hughes-Davis is in her 6th and 7 hobbyist who's been a resident of Davis, California for the past 27 years. She is now a part-time freelance writer and editor.

# High Blood

*Violeta Hughes-Davis*

HITS describe to those who conserve bouts of the nature of the perspective of the what makes their blood pressure rise or makes them at least, consider their all's well with their world and with themselves.—Ed.

The INQUIRER is a member of the PHILIPPINE PRESS INSTITUTE The National Association of Philippine Newspapers

# With gratitude and profound humility

LETTERS

WITH HEARTFELT gratitude and profound humility, I acknowledge the overwhelming support of your support, by the tens of thousands, from all walks of life, throughout this country. The spontaneous demonstrations of trust and confidence in me and of the institution I represent, through your prayers, rallies, vigils, manifestos, resolutions, messages and phone calls, have been a continuous source of strength for me and my family. These were dark hours and by your votes taken the baseless, unfounded, malicious and unjust attempt to remove me was blunted squ on our beloved country.

We have all been traumatized to the core with which some are willing to weaken or destroy the country for their self-enrichment. They trivialize democratic principles and suppress the truth at their convenience. At once more, you have demonstrated through your support and vigilance that, at the source of governmental authority and the conscience of the nation, you do not allow anyone to make a mockery of our democracy institutions.

It is by your faith in me and in the judiciary that I deepen my resolve to persevere with the judicial reforms I commenced when I was appointed as Chief Justice. I will fulfill my vision and my mission to protect and defend its independence and make it truly effective and efficient, ever worthy of the public's trust and confidence. A strong judiciary is indispensable to the balance of powers; it is integral to a strong democracy. More than ever, we should be encouraged, rather than disheartened, by those who fear its successes. Evil will always lie with us.

I will not fail you.

Mir uning, maraming salamat po.

**—HILARIO DAVIDE JR.**
**Chief Justice, Supreme Court of the Philippines**
**Padre Faura, Manila**

## Unacceptable excuse for their action

I WISH to comment on the Hala second-tower incident.

The two men who died in their endeavor of the Hala control tower used as their excuse their frustration about corruption. Their excuse for their behavior may be valid. But law-abiding citizens cannot accept their excuse for the takeover. Otherwise, anybody who has an excuse will cause disruptions like those of the Hala control tower and Ordonez apartments regularly. Our society will slip into lawlessness.

Fortunately, our society deeply values the rule of law. We observe our processes for change no matter how slow. What sounds is not the agreed but the direction of these processes.

**—ROMEO J. MAJADILLE,**
**(rjmjar@hotmail.yahoo.com)**

go sa inyong lider, at hanlaang lagay pamahalaan kaya at ang ating bayan ng Nong Muehlgaus?

Daphne salonga hanlayang senate likely cakod ng dili mahalod and mga pwede tga ibang kontrya sa libot talagod sa inyong maging pinaka ug mga nasyfhin ding sa atong nasud ug pare kanaha.

Good bless na shawa!

**—PABLITO DAVID, Jr.**
**Chief Scribe, Supreme Court of the Philippines**
**Padre Faura, Manila**

## Does the Brat Pack deserve thanks?

RELIGIOUS broadcaster Mike Velarde says the Brat Pack, referring to Sen. Philipp Fuentebella and his bunch, deserves the respect of the public for impeaching Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr. Surely, Velarde understands that respect is earned before it is given. Did Brother Mike stop to wonder why the impeachment complaint, instigated by two young, brainy congressmen, was instantly met with a resounding public outcry against the impeachment? There surely bugtok the public outrage: lack of credibility.

Did Velarde wonder why the Senate had no difficulty getting the Judiciary Development Fund records for the Senate investigation, but not the House of Representatives? Fuentebella and the Nationalist People's Coalition lackeys may be praised for all their efforts to uncover alleged fraud but when they failed to observe protocol and decorum that is deserving of the highest magistrate of the land, and tried to push by sheer force of number a defective and unverified complaint to the Senate under the guise of patriotic duty to their Naga constituents, such action exposes the character of arrogance of the sly and manipulative politicians.

Fuentebella may mean well in his intentions but he is well-advised to be careful of his actions and not allow himself to be used by others with insidious motives for public outcry against the impeachment? There surely bugtok the public outrage: lack of credibility.

Did Velarde wonder why the Senate had no difficulty getting the Judiciary Development Fund records for the Senate investigation, but not the House of Representatives? Fuentebella and the Nationalist People's Coalition lackeys may be praised for all their efforts to uncover alleged fraud but when they failed to observe protocol and decorum that is deserving of the highest magistrate of the land, and tried to push by sheer force of number a defective and unverified complaint to the Senate under the guise of patriotic duty to their Naga constituents, such action exposes the character of arrogance of the sly and manipulative politicians.

Fuentebella may mean well in his intentions but he is well-advised to be careful of his actions and not allow himself to be used by others with insidious motives for public outcry against the impeachment.

# Wind Blown seeks history in Marho Classic

By Edwin Villanueva

IN WHAT could be his final race before he is retired to stud, Wind Blown, the country's foremost galloper, gunns for history when he competes in the Marho Breeders' Cup Classic this Sunday.

"Hopefully, he'll live up to racing fans' expectations again," thereat Eugenio, Wind Blown's owner, told the Inquirer yesterday.

If Wind Blown wins the One 23 event at the Santa Ana Park, he would enter local racing history books as the first horse to take the prestigious race three years in a row.

Sources said it could be the farewell run of the multi-titled, two-time Horse of the Year who also won the Breeders' Cup 3-Year-Old crown three years ago.

The sources added that a "Wind Blown's Racing Festival" is already in the marks for the Dec. 7 date at Santa Ana, the event will be highlighted by a farewell gallop by the well-loved progeny of Harris and Wind in My Hair.

Bred by Marlo chan Sandy Javier and conditioned by Mamer Manaling, Wind Blown has earned more than P16 million, the most by any racehorse in the country.

He has a sterling record of 10 wins from 16 starts in stake races, in 40 career starts. His biggest victories, aside from the 2001-02 BC Classic, came in the Presidential Gold Cup (2000-01), Open Classic, Senate and Congress Cup, among others.

After losing in the Pole Gentleman 60-we Cup last April, he returned from a six-month layoff to win his comeback race (Saddle & Club Special) last Oct. 26 and then prevailed again in the 4th Philippine Hilton Cup Classic last Nov. 9.

Marho president Antero "Pando" Pay-ar said the BC Classic is one of the five stakes in the 4th Marho Breeders' Cup-card that also includes the Juvenile Colts, Juvenile Fillies, 3-Year-Old Colts and 3-Year-Old Fillies.

## Elizalde shirking IOC duties?

CLEAN LIVING

*Manolo R. Iñigo*

INTERNATIONAL Olympic Committee representative to the Philippines Frank Elizalde should act swiftly in solving the problems of the Philippine Olympic Committee before these become more complicated. In the eyes and ears of the IOC at Lit at RP sports is concerned because the Olympic people do not know the real situation in the country. As IOC representative, he is supposed to report all matters regarding the Olympic movement in the country and recommend to the IOC what should be done.

But many say Elizalde shirks his duties to protect the Olympic movement. In the past, they noted, that he took sides in the matter of former POC president Cojuangco and he intervened in the last POC election between Cojuangco and Go Teng Kok. And, most recently he did not even lift a finger in resolving "government intervention" in sports, in particular the basketball case between the SBP and the Ropi.

"We do not hold Mr. Elizalde in high regard," said a disgruntled sports official. "We need a strong IOC representative to stir Philippines who can decide immediately regardless of who will be hurt or who will be affected."

Elizalde holds a very important position in Philippine sports. Elizalde's recommendation carries much weight with the IOC, now headed by Belgian Jacques Rogge, because the Olympic body favors only to him.

Still, Elizalde has the habit of always entering POC controversies or the IOC when he could very well settle these local conflicts by merely calling the feuding parties to the conference table by acting as referee and preventing these problems from reaching the IOC. He was appointed to the position by former IOC president Juan Antonio Samaranch on July 11, 1980, replacing the late Jorge Vargas.

MORE ON MARIO DELEFEROS. His name may not ring a bell to the young generation of basketball fans, but the name Mario Deleferos will always be remembered by many old-timers, especially the old-timers. Now 70 years old and bed-ridden, Mario will be honored during the halftime ritual of Game one-hundredth anniversary on Saturday, Nov. 22.

Born in Escalante, Negros Occidental, Mario started playing for Escalante Philippines in Cebu where he was spotted by the late Fr. Edgar Maclin, then athletics moderator of Ateneo de Manila. Mario played four years for Ateneo in the NCAA, helping the Squires win the national title in 1953 and 1954. Ballesteros, Tito Lawsin and Francisco Rubit formed the dreaded triangular defense of Ateneo against the great Carlos Loyzaga of San Beda College. Mario's teammates were Jose Ma. Carbo, Cito Santiago, Honorio Mayordigo, Mike Liñana, Yancy Aurel Monserrell, S. Sulit-varsh, Serafin Wits, Jose Gimeno, E. Villareal and Tito Fernando.

After Ateneo, Mario played for 7-Up in the defunct Manila Industrial-Commercial Athletic Association (Mica) and then for Clarkies, together with American basketball wizard Leo Pondle, that were the Mica championship.

Across the NATION
Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

# 22 boat passengers saved

By Carla P Gomez
With Regina Bureau

BACOLOD CITY—Three persons, two of them children, died while 22 others were rescued on Monday, three days after their cargo vessel sank at the height of tropical storm "Nanay."

Bernabe Comacical, 71, owner of the ill-fated ML Amaro, died of dehydration and heart failure at about 10:30 a.m., said Chief Petty Officer Marcial Lindayan, head of Coast Guard detachment.

Fishermen found Comacical and several other passengers drifting on a life raft in the waters near Pulupandan at about 4 p.m. on Monday and brought them to Cadiz town in Negros. Lindayan told our reporter.

Twenty other passengers on board improvised lifebuoys were found by fishermen in the waters off Antique and Palawan.

One of them, Perfecton de la Concepcion, told the Coast Guard station commander in Cuyo, Bal-asa Robles Jr., that her two young children died on the third day they were at sea.

Robles said Rodelina later decided to throw the bodies of her children—Jonalyn, 10 and Jason, 3—into the water because their bodies started to smell.

The Coast Guard said 13 of the rescued passengers were brought to the Cuyo District Hospital while the rest were in Antique. Twelve passengers have remained missing.

The ML Asaan left Sipalay City in Negros Occidental for Palawan at about 10 p.m. on Nov. 13. It sank 1.6 nautical miles off Cuyo at around 9 a.m. the following day after huge waves brought by the storm tore a hole in the vessel.

Five passengers were rescued on Sunday and were brought back to Bacolod.

One of them, Artie Galeo, 35, who went in a hurry to return to his family in Sipalay, some 180 km south of here, said: "We are very happy to be alive."

Galeo said the vessel was loaded with 300 sacks of salt when it sailed to Cuyo.

COLOR EXPLOSION
An explosion of colors filled the streets of Bacolod City during the city's recent celebration of the Masskara Festival with street performers in costumes and masks depicting what the face is all about—a celebration of life.

## Cops' feud traced to syndicate protector

GENERAL SANTOS CITY—The bickering between police officers of this city and of Sarangani province started to heat up after members of the Sarangani police force refused to divulge the identity of a police officer who had been accused of protecting a car theft syndicate.

Only this week, an internal car theft report identified a battle-tank unit (the Sarangani police battalion) as the one that protected the syndicate, thus giving tactical advantage to the policemen from this city in a province of a car theft syndicate operating here.

Sen. Supt. Wilfredo Dangalan, Sarangani police chief, refused to identify the policemen named in the report.

Dangalan said he would personally arrest the suspect once the case is filed in court.

### Irked

Dangalan's refusal to identify the policeman has irked Senior Supt. Jorge Aquitap, this police chief, claiming that Dangalan's refusal to identify the alleged syndicate protector placed the entire city police command in a bad light.

Aquitap dared Dangalan to identify the policeman to clear the names of other policemen in the city.

Ishak was arrested by elements of the Sarangani police during a clandestine operation in Gensan City.

The suspect who identified his three other companions in the car theft syndicate, one of whom was among those who killed the city jail supervisor with five bullets during a jailbreak by detainees Tahir Alonto in November 2000.

Agustin Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

## Roundup

### Army officer killed

ZAMBOANGA CITY—Another army officer was killed while three soldiers were wounded in an ambush by armed men in Barangay Bulong in Diplahan, Basilan Friday (Aug. 6no. 5 Hours Before, 1st Tabak Infantry Division commander. Identified the slain soldier as 2Lt. Rolando Vitorio, and those wounded as Sgt. Roger Rivera, Cpl. Rodolfo dela Cruz and ex-Private Eddie Ramos, all belonging to the 32nd Infantry Battalion. Southern Command chief Lt. General Roy Kyamko said Vitorio was ambushed during the ambush, but died while being airlifted by this city. The Southern chief said he was not convinced that Moro Islamic Liberation Front members were behind the attack. He said the soldiers were using the vehicle of Mayor James Salliman when ambushed.

Jose S. Alipala, PDI Mindanao Bureau

### Suspected robber slain

MAGUINDANAO—A suspected bank robber was killed in a shootout with police shortly after robbers took P600,000 from the Land Bank branch in Barangay San Pascual Tuesday. Supt. Roderick Mariano, Kapatagan police chief, identified the slain suspect as Nanato Payas, 39. His companions, Rolando Ferla, 31, was arrested while two other suspects escaped. In Manguad, robbers took away P600,000 from a bank in Talitay town also on Tuesday. Supt. Concepcion Mabato, Bongued police director, said the suspects destroyed the entrance grills of the Sumondi Bank and used acetylene torch to destroy the vault.

Carmela Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Desk, and Ryan Cabildo, PDI Ilo Ilocos Luzon Bureau

### Medical donations

CAMP RAJAH RANAHAN CITY—The Armed Forces and Police Savings and Loans Association Inc. (AFPSLAI) last week donated medical supplies and equipment to the 801st Army Brigade's military wing at the City Integrated Hospital (CIH) here. The AFPSLAI also gave out advanced Christmas presents to 10 children confined at the hospital. Brig. Gen. Alexander Yano, 801st brigade commander, expressed gratitude to the AFPSLAI for the donation which included three boxes of thermometers, a thermometer and a pulse rate machine. Retired Maj. Gen. Rolando Fiorla, AFPSLAI general manager, handed over the donations.

Agustin Z. Zonio, PDI Mindanao Bureau

### 2 drown in beach

STA. DOMINGO, Ilocos Sur—Three residents here drowned at a beach resort in Barangay Cabaquilan Sunday. Police identified the victims as Melody Evangelista, 31, Jessie Payumo, 18, and Herman Agustin, 19. Report said Agustin tried to save Evangelista and Payumo but they were swept by a strong current. Agustin's body was recovered on Sunday afternoon. Evangelista and Payumo were retrieved hours of Monday morning.

Leonardo Dalisay Jr., PDI Ilo Ilocos Luzon Bureau

### Cops bust Huk guerrillas

CAMP OLIVAS, Pampanga—Police announced the busting of a platoon group of the communist group Hukbong Mapagpalaya ng Bayan after the arrest of the group's secret leaders in Candaba, Pampanga, on Oct. 27. The seven were Ba leaders comprised the "semi-cadres" of the Pelas-kaysanayong Samahang Anak Pawis, according to Senior Supt. Rodolfo Mendoza, Pampanga police director. They were Raymund Suarez, Ca sami Garmento, Rodolfo Guzmino, Ronald Seguin, Larry Valdez, Gary Sangalang and Joselito Jaqing. Jaqing, also known as Ka Jose, is the highest officer of the HUB banned but is reportedly led by a certain Bindo Mulgado Inc.

Timothy Duque, PDI Central Luzon Bure

IMAGINARY ASSAULT
US and Philippine troops take positions during joint military exercises between the Philippine and US military in Capas, Tarlac.

# Eastern Samar provincial board imposes moratorium on large-scale mining, logging

By Edson Cabe
PDI Pagsu Bureau

BORONGAN, Eastern Samar—The provincial board has imposed an indefinite moratorium on large-scale mining and logging operations in Eastern Samar.

The board passed an ordinance on mining and logging ban in October in response to the clamor of environmental groups to protect the forests of the province, which suffered from the devastating floods in 1989 due to illegal logging.

Eastern Samar is the second province in Eastern Visayas to pass such an ordinance. Last September, the Samar provincial board passed the ordinance that imposes a 50-year moratorium on the conduct of large-scale mining operations in the province.

Provincial Ordinance No. 09 covers all persons and entities engaged in large-scale mining and logging operations and exploration.

But exploration activities covered by proper permits issued by the Department of Environment and Natural Resources prior to the effectivity of the ordinance will be allowed to continue its activities but will not be allowed to develop or utilize said mineral resources.

All permits for large-scale operations existing before the effectivity of the ordinance shall be suspended. But one expansion of whatever size or area shall be allowed.

The governor will form a task force that will oversee the implementation of the ordinance.

Provincial Administrator Flora Sedano Jr. drafted the proposed ordinance and led the lobby group, including the Samar Island Biodiversity Foundation and other non-government organizations.

The original proposal called for a 10-year moratorium, but board member Hon. Constantino Jr. batted for an indefinite ban, which was supported and adopted by the provincial board.

There is an existing mining operation on Homonhon Island, Guiuan. The Hinatuan Mining Corp. is pushing the resumption of their operations in Manicani Island, also in Guiuan.

Several mining firms are also seeking permits to operate in various parts of Eastern Samar.

# Contamination feared in Davao water source

DAVAO CITY—The Davao City Chamber of Commerce and Industry Inc. (DCCCI) has challenged the Davao City Water District (DCWD) to reveal all about the real situation of the environmental Talomo-Lipadas watershed.

Romero Sawa, DCCCI president, said the DCWD was one of the primary sources of reports published in various local and national newspapers on what's happening to the city's aquifer.

Engineer Rolando Almonte of the DCWD earlier claimed that the city has the cleanest water in the country, but it is reportedly threatened by growing industrial activities near the water source, prompting it to recommend a ground zero water protection zone.

Almonte said a "very high fecal contamination" was noted in the Talomo, Lipadas and Bago Aplaya rivers.

But Sawa said the DCWD was unwilling half of the truth and did not further to point out key points which are contamination from studies conducted by the People Collaborating for Environmental and Economic Management (PCEEM).

Sawa, who is also a board member of PCEEM, said the Talomo-Lipadas watershed became the focus of the study as it is determine the state of health of the watershed and evaluate the capacity of the aquifer for the long-term requirement of the city.

He said PCEEM got hired into a station that will be used to last-minute activities that will prolong the health of the watershed.

Sawa said the information is needed by DCWD to formulate long-term plans to supply the city with enough water of good quality, and formulate alternative solutions if the present aquifer could not provide the requirement.

"The PCEEM project attained its objectives of preserving the benchmark data, however, DCWD did not use the data for the purpose and instead supported [environmentalist] groups to raise the information and interpret the results in a different plane," he said.

He said DCWD should also update the city council on how it is complying with the short-to-long-term recommendations of the twin freshwater studies.

Meanwhile, in support of the city government's efforts to stop water pollution, the DCCCI and the Filipino Toronto Economy and Environment Association (FILTEE) have passed a resolution urging the city council to declare the Talomo-Lipadas watershed as an Environmentally Critical Area (ECA) and to commence immediately the construction of a concrete watershed boundary wall to prevent affectionate individuals and squatting in the watershed.

Sawa said they have come up with the resolution to put an end to the brewing issue on alleged pesticide contamination of the city's aquifer.

An analysis of the Talomo and Talomo-Bivoa streams through lands of heavy-metal and effluent organisms in water samples from the rivers.

Environmentalists alleged that water pollution might be caused by the presence of banana and pineapple plantations in the area.

But Sawa said it is unfair to hastily link banana and pineapple plantations to the contamination because they only occupy about 2.5 percent of the total area of the Talomo-Lipadas Watershed which is more than 50,000 hectares.

He said the occupants of the remaining 97.5 percent should also be studied. Anthony L. Alfiado, PDI Mindanao Bureau

INQUIRER Northern Luzon

Edna Jan Bandayrel
Baguio City/Rolando B. Fernandez

# Reforms in AFP now in place

OAKWOOD HOSTAGES

DE GUZMAN

**TWO weeks after the failed Oakwood mutiny on July 27, President Macapagal-Arroyo appointed then Appointments Secretary Constancio Penaflor de Guzman as defense undersecretary, as well as chair of the Presidential Task Force on AFP Reforms to offer solutions to the origins of wars in conflicts.**

**Penaflor-de Guzman, a native of San Antonio, Nueva Ecija, and the first woman to be appointed undersecretary of the Department of National Defense, shares with the Inquirer's Nueva Ecija correspondent, Ancheta Ringor, the reforms that her task force has proposed, and are starting to implement, to curb corruption in the military ilanopsis:**

**What were your thoughts about your appointment?**

Q A

(The President) was putting me in the job to deliver something soon. Immediately after I took my oath, (Defense Secretary Eduardo) Ermita told me to do the management audit of the procurement and fund disbursement systems in the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

**Was there a time frame given to you?**

Yes, a month. The deadline was inclusive of the identification of task force members, actual organization and identification of other people who would compose the secretariat and those who would be named as members of the technical working group. It also included planning of the audit work, actual study and evaluation of findings.

**Most of the proposals we have submitted have already been considered.**

**What are these proposals?**

**One is the creation of a single bids and awards committee (BAC) for the entire AFP to be based at the General Headquarters. The President approved this recommendation through Executive Order 233 on Sept. 11. The order streamlined the rules and procedures of defense (and military) contracts. Under this scheme, the department secretary has been authorized to sign and approve government contracts for (DND) requirements. Exceptions are contracts required by law to be acted upon and/or approved by the President. The scheme also authorized the (AFP) chief of staff to enter into contracts worth P500 million.**

**How many BACs did the AFP have before?**

119.

**How will members of a single BAC in the AFP cope, considering that there used to be 119 BACs?**

**The executive order provided for the full assistance from a secretariat and a pool of experts with legal, technical and financial backgrounds to compose the technical working group. The AFP has already been given workshops on the implementation of this single BAC.**

**What other reforms have you and your task force recommended that the President approved?**

On procurement, fund disbursement and accounting system.

**What specific reforms did you recommend on the military's procurement system?**

We recommended, and the President approved, the increase in the level of authorization for local procurements for the AFP chief of staff, the commanding generals of the Army, Navy and Air Force and other qualified officials.

**As an example, the level of authorization for the chief of staff, as provided in the 1996 level, was only P1.5 million. This was now increased to P5 million. The levels of authorization for the other officers were correspondingly increased.**

**What's the significance of this level of authorization given to the concerned officers?**

The officers concerned will now be able to execute their procuring functions outside of the public bidding scheme, shortening the number of processing days. But, of course, there are counterpart measures put in place to ensure proper implementation of this increased level of authorization on local procurements.

**What are your proposals to improve the disbursement of funds?**

We proposed certain mechanisms to ensure timely release of budgetary requirements to finance our soldiers' logistical needs at the ground level. Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin agreed to do those. In fact, we suggested that the reforms should be in place by January 2004, but (Boncodin) said most of them could be implemented starting the last quarter of 2003. We also suggested revisions of certain provisions of laws, rules and regulations that are no responsive to the peculiar needs of the AFP, particularly on matters pertaining to their needs for capital works, like vehicles and other equipment.

**On accounting procedures?**

The President approved our recommendation for the inclusion of the AFP in the pilot rollout of the Electronic Non-Governmental Accounting System in (NGAS). We have done the necessary coordination with the Commission on Audit and so far we have conducted the necessary briefings and seminar workshops to ensure the preparedness of AFP on this system, both in the technical and logistical requirements.

**What recommendations have you made for the DND?**

We also recommended the creation of a single BAC that would handle contracts worth over P50 million, this, upon the task force's recommendation, the President, while sitting as defense secretary, issued a department order restructuring the officers of the undersecretaries and assistant secretaries and delineating their functions and areas of responsibility.

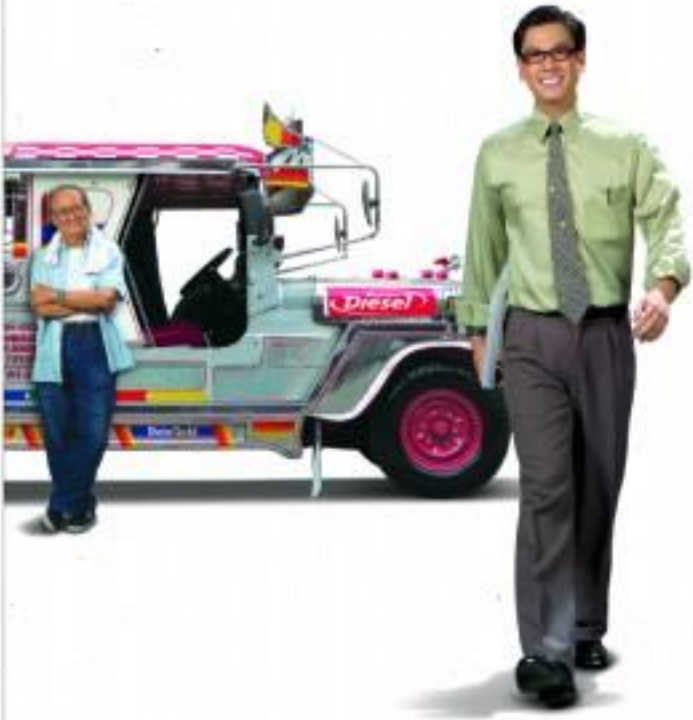
**What more are you expected to do?**

We are aware that changes do not happen overnight. The President ordered our task force to continuously oversee the implementation of the reforms we have recommended. Through another executive order, the President created and mandated the undersecretary for internal control for (DND), this is my area of jurisdiction, to institutionalize reforms in the procurement and fund disbursement systems in the AFP and (DND). This gave us the authority to operate and institutionalize the initiatives and to ensure the continuous execution of the reforms in the organization.

What Drives You

Mga pangarap ni Junior

Para matupad niya sa mas magandang kinabukasan, kailangan mo ng kaibigan na maaasahan at mapagkakatiwalaan. Yan ang Caltex Power Diesel. May additives na nagla-lubricate at naglilinis ng makina para lagi siya at mabigyan ka kalakasan. Di ba mabuti kaya sulit lagi ang kanya. Dahil sa buhay, 'di lang pasahero ang sakay— kasama pati ang mga pangarap mo. Sa Caltex Power Diesel, laging gagante ang laban ng buhay.




Diesel
What Drives You CALTEX

# Gloria-Noli team looms in 2004 elections

From page A1

against Secretary Raul Roco is also seeking the presidency.

### 'Mid-passage'

A stalwart of the ruling Lakas-Christian Muslim Democrats said that talks for a Macapagal-De Castro tandem were "already at mid-passage."

"It's a strong team up that can take on all challengers," the Lakas official said on condition that he not be named.

Another administration source placed the odds of Ms Macapagal picking De Castro as running mate at 50 percent. "It's 50 percent go," he said, qualifying that this was his "personal assessment."

### Topping surveys

He said Ms Macapagal herself was on top of effort to re-enlist De Castro, who has been topping surveys for both the presidential and vice presidential races.

The talk in political circles is that after attempts failed to have Roco slide down as the vice presidential candidate of Ms Macapagal, De Castro has been considered as her running mate.

An internal Malacañang survey conducted two weeks ago reportedly found that if De Castro were to run for president, he would get 32 percent of the votes. The survey also purportedly indicated that Roco came in second with 28 percent, and Ms Macapagal, 19 percent.

It is widely accepted that a De Castro presence **in the administration ticket can blunt the sure-getting potential of possible opposition tandem like a** Roy Loyola team up.

### Lopez support

Senator Edgardo Lopez (Lakas) disclosed that a Macapagal-De Castro team up was in the works, with the powerful Lopez business empire allegedly backing the ticket. "There are talks, just like there are talks for every possible tandem," said Legarda, who is planning to run for the vice presidency.

Asked whether it was the idea of the Lopez family or the President's political strategists, Legarda said: "I'm not privy to any information." But with a smile, she quickly added: "Anything is possible yet."

### Playing coy

Legarda, who established a name as a broadcast journalist of ABS-CBN before she became senator, resigned from the ruling Lakas-CMD early last month. A Lakas stalwart said then that Lopez might have felt that she could not be the running mate of Ms Macapagal because both are women.

De Castro, an ABS-CBN broadcaster himself, tried to play coy but refused to rule out the possibility of his teaming up with Ms Macapagal for next year's elections.

He said that anything was possible at this point, adding that he indeed received such an "offer" from the President's men.

"Everybody is backing me," said De Castro when asked whether the Lopez family was behind the team up.

He said he had been in constant communication with ABS-CBN chair Gabby Lopez, but the latter neither branded the idea as unjust him to agree to the team-up with Ms Macapagal. "We only talk about broadcasting ... how to improve the ratings," he said.

### Wednesday group

Sen. Francis Pangilinan, a member of the so-called "Wednesday Group," was surprised when told about the Macapagal-De Castro team up.

"There was information that would suggest that story's to be taking place. As far as we are concerned, first, De Castro had not mentioned any arrangement or talks with Ms Macapagal. And I like to think that if such happens, we would know (as members of the Wednesday Group)," said Pangilinan.

Pangilinan said De Castro had not yet even made up his mind on whether to join the presidential election. "Nothing definite. Even that is still in the air."

Besides De Castro and Pangilinan, the members of the Wednesday Group are Senators Joker Arroyo, Manuel Villar and Ralph Recto. All five are members of the administration coalition in the Senate, yet they have been critical of some of the President's policies.

### Larsen-Poe meeting

Lacson could be convinced to "respect" what he and Poe had agreed on, as he refused to say what they had talked about in Nur's residence in Greenhills, San Juan, last week.

But a source in the opposition claimed that Poe had told Lacson that he would remain a reluctant candidate in spite of his supposed declaration to make himself available as a candidate of the opposition.

The other day Lacson numbered in the 4-square his meeting with Poe, which came as a result of Lacson's invitation for a dialogue last month with the popular actor.

Poe, who is being considered by some LDP leaders to run for the presidency, has yet to declare his plans for 2004.

Minority leader Hector Sotto III said he met with Poe the other night during which it was agreed that Poe himself would announce whether he would join the opposition's search for a standard bearer.

Sen. Aquilino Pimentel Jr., meanwhile, asked the Senate yesterday to pass a law declaring an elected public official automatically resigned from office should he or she decide to run for an elective government post. In Senate Resolution No. 2795, Pimentel said his proposal would "end political adventurism."

# Gringo, me too

From page A1

coup d'etat against him were dropped.

Honasan told reporters at the Supreme Court that he would like to see a "political solution" to his predicament, saying allegations that he and group of young officers had tried to gain power were "politically-driven."

Honasan has gone to the Supreme Court to stop the Department of Justice from charging him in court with coup d'etat—a non-bailable offense punishable with death.

### Who handles probe?

After hearing arguments on Honasan's petition that the investigation of the case be transferred from the justice department to the Office of the Ombudsman, the high court gave the two agencies 48 hours to agree on who should handle the investigations.

"But beyond the issue of jurisdiction that we raised, what is more important to public interest is the political solution to this issue and that is found on the will of the President to have unity, peace, and reconciliation," Honasan said.

"This is what we really want. Beyond the issue of (former) President (Joseph) Estrada, the Marcos issue, the issue with (Eduardo "Buddy") Cojuangco, what should be supported here is the call for unity and reconciliation, beyond the legal properties," he added.

"We will support (the President's call) if it goes beyond words and pronouncing."

### Primary jurisdiction

During the hearing, former Justice Hugo Gutierrez Jr. argued on Honasan's behalf that the investigation should be transferred to the Office of Ombudsman because it had "primary jurisdiction" over the case.

Gutierrez said that the crime of coup d'etat attributed to Honasan was done "in relation to his office" as a senator, and so the Ombudsman should investigate him.

Gutierrez said Honasan was charged because of the statements in connection with his so-called "National Recovery Program" (NRP).

### Related to duties

"Even assuming for the sake of argument that the (falsehood advocacy of armed struggle is true, a coup d'etat intended to achieve the success of a legislative reform program would still be in relation to the senator's public office. Any advocacy of a national recovery program, whether violent or peaceful, would be in relation to the office of a senator," Honasan said in his petition for certiorari.

The government has alleged that Honasan attended several meetings with the mutiny leaders and that the senator told them that his program was going to be implemented only after the administration is overthrown.

### 'Absurd'

"Absurd," Honasan said of the allegations. "He (Honasan) will do it (NRP) through elections and not through a coup d'etat."

Honasan said the justice department was harassing him because he planned to run either for president or vice president under the opposition banner.

The coup d'etat charge against Honasan has been set for resolution after the senator failed to file his counter-affidavit on Sept. 22, the deadline set by the justice department.

Ombudsman Simeon Marcelo earlier told the court that the justice department had the full authority and jurisdiction to conduct the preliminary investigation on charges against Honasan.

In his 27-page comment on Honasan's petition for certiorari, Marcelo said the alleged acts of Honasan in leading the mutiny could be considered part of his duties as legislator.

"We stretch of imagination can qualify such acts done to overthrow the incumbent government and authorities by arms and violence, as acts commission of the discharge of the petitioner's (Honasan's) legislative duties as senator," Marcelo said.

In these times of peace and goodwill, Honasan must think Marcelo is misguided.

# Docs to open 'window' in twins' skull

GMA and Shannen Aguirre, the 18-month-old conjoined twins from Negros Occidental who were flown to New York in September, will undergo next week another preliminary operation that will lead to the final surgery separating them.

Surgeons plan to open next week another "window" in the skull of the twins, who are joined at the top of their heads, and begin the tricky task of gradually diverting blood supply from their shared second brain tissue. This is in preparation for the final separation procedure.

The boys' pediatrician, Dr. Robert Marino of Montefiore Medical Center in New York's Bronx section, said doctors would also try again to insert tissue expanders between the twins' skulls and scalps this time over the initial heads where they are separated. The first expanders had to be taken out two weeks ago when the baffles developed an infection.

The expanders were inserted on Oct. 21 during the first of what was envisioned as three or four operations climaxing with the boys' separation.

The first expansion was scheduled for Nov. 10, but doctors noticed some liquid pooling around the plastic pouches beneath the scalp, forcing them to delay but not cancel the operation for two more weeks ago.

## Temporary

Doctors said the removal of the tissue expanders, which was performed in a 45-minute operation, was temporary and would not impact on their long-term plans for separating the twins.

The twins arrived with their mother, Aileen Aguirre, in the United States on Sept. 18. In between the operations at Montefiore, the twins recover at the Wilhelmina Children's Hospital in Valhalla, a town where they undergo physical and nutritional therapy to strengthen them for the surgeries to come and their separate lives afterward.

Because the twins are joined at the top of their heads, they cannot sit up, stand or even crawl.

The series of surgeries on the twins are being performed by pediatric neurosurgeons and craniofacial plastic surgeons, aided by a team of 30 specialists.

## $1-M procedure

The entire procedure costs more than $2 million. But Montefiore and Wyclebuhr are covering the cost of the operations as well as pre and post-care services. The physicians involved in the procedures are all waiving their fees.

The Philippine Airlines Foundation provided the airfare for the twins and their mother. With a report from AP

# 9 Kuwaiti teeners gang-rape Filipina

Front page A1

the investigation and prosecution of the rape case by Kuwaiti authorities.

"We would assist him in any way we can to meet as we get a full report about his case from our embassy," Belluomo said.

More than 60,000 Filipinos live and work in this oil-rich emirate, many of them maids. AFP with a report by Jerome Aning

# Kidnapped Coca-Cola executive found dead

Front page A1

He was commercial finance director of "The Coca-Cola Export Corp. and names can handle Philippines, Brunei, Guam and Micronesia, according to Toronto Star line, president of the Coca-Cola Export Corp. Bottlers Philippines in Pasig City.

Ang Sec called by's kidnapping and number the worst abduction case so far this year.

## A kidnap a day

She also said the kidnapping situation in the country now was the worst in about 10 years, with one recorded in August to December averaging a kidnapping a day. There have been more than 100 abductions so far this year, she added.

"This case would be our worst case (for the authorities). It's a very heavy (hurt) promises," Ang-Sec said.

A security guard found Sy's body on Pacific Avenue, Marina Bay Homes, Gen. Emilio Aguinaldo Boulevard in Barangay Don Galo at around 6 a.m.

He was a member of 3016 Capri, Barangay Magkaisang Bayan, Quezon City.

She have four puncture wounds on her right thigh inside from the injuries on her left hand, according to the police.

Insp. Gene Ygnacio said police had yet to confirm with Sy's family if the suspected kidnappers asked for ransom money.

He added that by was no negotiation the Metro Funeral Homes where her family identified her body.

## Last sighting

The victim's brothers Rubio and Pitalbodo Sy told police they last saw their sister around 7:15 a.m. on Monday when she left for work in her Honda Civic (PKS 214). Sy's vehicle, with license plate XEE-218.

Jil Hayden, public affairs director of Coca-Cola Export, said he was the first to identify Sy because he arrived at the funeral parlor ahead of her husband.

"We are appalled at what happened to Bella," Hayden told the reporters in a phone interview.

He added, "She had no enemies nor were aware of. She was such a sweet girl."

The Sy-Ramos tried calling Sy's home but the family declined to talk to reporters.

## Blue blazer

The victim was still wearing her dark blue blazer, gray pant, black shirt and sneakers when she was found by security guard Robert Bruna.

Senior Insp. Emma Cubos of the Southern Police District's Station of the Crime Operations said by security guard Robert Bruna.

Senior Insp. Ronald Bulilan, Parañaque police chief, said the victim had been killed somewhere else before her body was dumped on the side of the road.

According to the report of the Quezon City police, Tipson said, Sy was abducted by unidentified suspects in Roh na Dois, Quezon City at around 9:45 a.m. on Monday.

Witnesses said two men riding a white Toyota Tamaraw FX pulled beside Sy's Sun Land then rammed the victim's vehicle.

They emerged minutes later carrying an unconscious Sy with unknown.

Police later recovered the abandoned Rav 4, with bullet holes and a pool of blood on the floor, at the boundary of Manila and Quezon City.

## Unfortunate

"It is very unfortunate that this thing happened," Ang-Sec told the reporters. "I hope that the Philippine National Police would really fulfill its promise of a breakthrough against kidnapping syndicates. We do not need another death for this to happen."

Acknowledging this country's growing kidnapping problem, President Macapagal-Arroyo last month appointed former Defense Secretary Angelo Reyes to coordinate various government agencies moving to battle the crime.

At the end of October, Ang-Sec said, a total of 190 cases had been reported, involving 143 victims. About 84 percent of the cases were in Manila.

## 21.3 percent jump

But Figure is slightly higher than the 83 abductions Reyes' agency had culled for the official figure already reflects a 21.7 percent jump in kidnappings from January to October last year.

Ang-Sec said that relatives of victims almost always paid ransom of about P1.2 million.

She said the ethnic Chinese community members had banded together to form support groups, giving advice to families of kidnap victims and helping them drive down the ransom.

## Cops distracted

"The criminals know that they can get away with it because the police are distracted" according to other security problems such as street protests and military rebellions, she added.

Lt. Col. Danilo Servando, a spokesperson for the anti-kidnapping task force, said the situation had improved since the new body was set up in October.

"Kidnapping cases had gone down to only three cases since the task force was formed last month," he told Reuters. With reports from AFP, Reuters

# Erap wary he won't be allowed to return, wants covenant

Front page A1

assignment, it will be a setback in the court," he said.

Fernandez's fears were echoed by his bank Bayan Joseph Victor TV' Ejercito, the deposed Pasig mayor's son by actress Dida Gomez.

"I fear that he wouldn't be allowed back home. I should have stayed with him," Ejercito said in a phone interview.

Masiguid-Arroyo's joint session any lawyer out of the picture in time for the 2004 elections, "Ejercito said in a phone interview.

## Erap factor

"The Erap factor still works, and GMA's aware it can," he said. "This is not the position of the family, but personally, given his fighting till to long series of major problems are still Erap base to beat with is a little subtle longer because the administration will be replaced soon."

But a court-appointed lawyer of Estrada's said Malacañang's sudden conciliatory gesture toward the ousted leader could endanger the petition pending before the Sandiganbayan.

"It could backfire," counsel Noel Mabasa said. "It shows that they are not influenced by Malacañang, the justices may act accordingly... to show that they cannot be dictated by the Palace."

## Another covenant

Defense, who spoke with friends as part of what he called a "personal effort," said his black pages could give Estrada a "verbal assurance" that he would be allowed to return if the Sandiganbayan allows him to travel.

Ejercito said Estrada's bodyguards could give their "sacred of honor" to each other on the issue.

Defense said Estrada called Mr. Masiguid's timing last. "If this was done one or two years ago, and house arrest (was allowed), it would have been okay," he quoted Estrada as saying. "Why is this being done only now?" Estrada asked.

Defense met with Estrada in his detention center in Camp Capinpin, Tanay, Rizal, to convey him to the medical treatment in the United States.

At one point, Defense recalled, Estrada even said he would no longer leave.

"I told him he should leave no matter what and that he would not be at risk of being paralyzed," Defense said.

The looming exit cost of the **congressmen behind Estrada**'s impeachment in 2000, noted that, even though Estrada said he did not want to seek reelection abroad supporters, his lawyers have a pending request with the Sandiganbayan.

"While he is saying otherwise, there is no official action by his lawyers," Defense said.

He said Estrada assured him that he was not behind destabilization attempts against Mr. Masiguid, particularly last week's protest rally in Makati's Ayala Avenue which was dispersed by the police.

"He said he was telling the people to calm down," Defense said.

In Malacañang, deputy presidential spokesperson Ricardo Saludo declined to discuss the new covenant.

"I have no comment on that, that is the first time I heard of it," Saludo, also the Cabinet secretary said.

Foreign Secretary Blas Ople said US Ambassador Francis Ricciardone called him to deny that the US Embassy would not issue a visa to Estrada. "That's a complete falsehood," Ople said.

## Two-edged sword

Mabasa, one of Estrada's four court-appointed lawyers, said the flurry of signals from Malacañang that it was open to the idea of Estrada undergoing surgery abroad appears to be a two-edged sword.

"It certainly is a double-edge sword," he said.

Mabasa acknowledged that Malacañang's declarations on the matter could help convince justices of the Sandiganbayan's special division to allow Estrada to travel on "humanitarian grounds."

But he said it could also lead to the rejection of the motion.

"It would be a disservice if the Palace" would just keep its mouth shut" on the matter, Mabasa said.

Estrada's spokesperson, Crispin Beltrallo, denied Malacañang's claim, but said he would leave the matter to the court to decide.

Although the Sandiganbayan is acting in a judicial issue, he said, it can also raise the matter before "political persuasion" and take into consideration Estrada's "patient's right" to have a doctor of his choice.

But Estrada lawyer Jose Pagsin said he did not share Malaya's optimism. "No. The court is not political. The issue is medical, not political," Pagsin said.

Malaya said defense lawyers should submit today a memorandum supporting their earlier motion for Estrada's "medical travel." He estimated the court may decide on the matter in two weeks.

## Change of heart

Ejercito, who succeeded his half brother as mayor, had appointly is change of heart in the past few days.

Last last month, Ejercito urged the Sandiganbayan to allow Estrada to leave for "humanitarian reasons."

Still, Ejercito said his family would welcome it if the government placed Estrada under house arrest.

Erlpang Sen. Luisa Ejercito-Estrada, the mayor questioned the timing of Ms Masiguid's decision.

"Why now? There are two reasons. One is that she wants Pimentel out of the picture and two, she wants the electorate to perceive her as a sympathetic leader."

Ejercito said if Ms Masiguid were really sincere in allowing her father to go abroad, she should have done it a long time ago.

Ejercito said his family did not owe the government any debt of gratitude.

"We are not even there anything. They have made my father's life miserable for three years," he said.

According to the mayor's projections, the "Erap factor" could command up to 35 percent of the votes.

Ejercito disclosed that Estrada would anoint the united opposition's presidential bet.

## Congress reaction

In Congress, the representatives who played key roles in Estrada's impeachment are pushing for a House resolution opposing his travel to the United States.

"Justice is denied to the people that every delay and every superfluous motion in the course of continuing the trial against former President Joseph Estrada," Bayan Muna party-list Rep. Satur Ocampo said.

Aside from Ocampo, other lawmakers in the resolution included Representatives Oscar Moreno of Misamis Oriental, who was one of the House prosecutors during his Senate impeachment trial, Oscar Rodriguez of Pampanga, Rampael Ortiz of Antipolo, Richard Gomez of Ilocos Sur, Juan de Lambayong del Sur, Arthur Defensor of Iloilo, Victor Chavez of Misamis Occidental, Antonio Carreon of Cebu, Sherlyn Ang-See and that relatives of victims almost always paid ransom of about P1.2 million.

She said the ethnic Chinese community members had banded together to form support groups, giving advice to families of kidnap victims and helping them drive down the ransom.

## Cops distracted

"The criminals know that they can get away with it because the police are distracted" according to other security problems such as street protests and military rebellions, she added.

Lt. Col. Danilo Servando, a spokesperson for the anti-kidnapping task force, said the situation had improved since the new body was set up in October.

"Kidnapping cases had gone down to only three cases since the task force was formed last month," he told Reuters. With reports from AFP, Reuters

# It's final: SC rules stolen $683M belongs to gov't

Front page A1

President Macapagal-Arroyo who has vowed to help recovering ourselves in Ligo City when she heard the news, said she was "pleased."

"The Supreme Court has issued no final ruling that the Marcos wealth is for the use of our farmers," she said. Under the law, the government assets have to go to land reform.

The Presidential Commission on Good Government, the agency tasked with recovering the Marcos ill-gotten assets, hailed the ruling.

"This decision conclusively declares to have what our people already know from history," said PCGG Commissioner Ruben Carranza in a statement.

## Indisputable

The decision made it "legally and factually indisputable" that Marcos, his immediate family relatives, close associates and other cronies amassed and stole vast government resources and that "their ill-gotten wealth was stashed away here and abroad," he said.

"With this decision, our people will recover more than just $600 million. With this historic SC decision, our people will recover the dignity stolen from them by the Marcos dictatorship and its cronies. With this decision, Filipinos can now cast off the embarrassment of having 17 years go on without recovering a single peso of the billions we've been told to account for corruption. With this decision, we can tell our children what justice means. With this decision no one will question their basic rights," he said.

## Delays caused by Marcoses

The ruling cited the "inconvenient life lost" that the delays in the case had been caused by the Marcoses.

"It will be a mockery of justice to allow them to benefit from it. By their own deliberate acts, not those of the Republic or anybody else, they are deemed to have altogether waived or abandoned their right to present its trial," the high court said.

Hermosa Jurisco, including Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr., concurred with the ruling. Justice Antonio Carpio did not take part in the deliberations.

## Territoriality

The ruling attacked Ruiz's forum order in declaring the court's jurisdiction and public international law.

"We reject this order outrightly because it is a transgression not only of the principle of territoriality in public international law but also of the jurisdiction of this Court recognized by the parties in interest and the Swiss government itself," the tribunal added.

In its petition, the Marcos widow, Imelda Marcos, and her children Irene Marcos-Araneta, Bongbong Marcos, and Aimee Marcos Otr, Ferdinand "Bongbong" Marcos Jr. asked the high court to set aside its July 25 ruling, saying it violated their right to due process.

Bongbong and Irene asked the high court to remand the case to the Sandiganbayan to give the Marcos family a chance to refute the witnesses and evidence presented by the state.

Imelda claimed that the decision violated her right to due process filed against her before the anti-graft court.

## No new issue raised

The tribunal disagreed, saying that the Marcoses did not raise any new issue in their motion for reconsideration.

The SC said that the Marcoses were accorded due process but they used it to delay the case.

"It would be repulsive to our basic concepts of justice and fairness to allow petitioners to hide behind technicalities to defeat the adjudication of this case and defeat the judgment of this Court which was promulgated only after the facts, issues and briefs in consideration was executed to exhaust and just determination," had been duly considered," it added.

The court rejected the Marcoses' contention that the proceedings under the forfeiture law were criminal in nature and thus gave them the right to give evidence and material them to cheating.

The SC said the proceedings were civil, not penal in nature, involving not the person but only a disputable res thereof in the form of the properties illegally acquired in favor of the State.

## Forfeiture law

The court said that under the forfeiture law and the executive order that created the PCGG, the government was required only to trace the known lawful income of respondents for the prima facie "presumption of illegal possession."

It said that the government was not required to prove facts presumption of illegal possession of the funds.

It said the Marcoses failed to show by clear and convincing evidence that the Swiss deposits were lawfully acquired and that they had other legitimate sources of income.

## Hearing, not trial

"They failed, or rather, refused, to raise any genuine issue of fact warranting a trial for the reception of evidence," the SC said.

The court also said that the Marcoses erroneously invoked "due hearing" to be synonymous with a trial.

"Hearing, as known in law, is not confined to trial but embraces the several stages of litigation, including the pre-trial stage... It does not necessarily imply the presentation of oral evidence in court and does it open court but that the parties are afforded the opportunity to be heard," the SC said.

It noted that under the forfeiture law, the word "hearing" does not always require the formal presentation of evidence in court. The parties are given the opportunity to participate and explain how they acquired the property in question.

"If they are unable to show to the satisfaction of the court that they lawfully acquired the property in question, then the court shall declare such property forfeited in favor of the state. There is no provision in the law that a full-blown trial ought to be conducted before the court declares the forfeiture of the subject property," the SC said.

SUERTRES 0 5 7
SIX DIGIT 2 6 5 5 0 4
6/42 Lotto 6 9 25 31 34 38
Vis-Mis 1 18 25 28 36 39

METRO
Editor Alexander S. Ulanday

# GMA: Drug use in public schools drops

## 3 Chinese yield ₱44M in shabu

By Leila Salaverria

A CEBUDE drug tongue yesterday unwittingly led police to his takeout in Malabon, Bulacan, and yielded 44 kilos of high grade shabu worth around P88 million.

Members of the Western Police District and the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency yesterday found the illegal drugs contained in boxes with china glassware markings in a bungalow-type house on Paul Street, Merangue Subdivision, Lambakin, Malabon. The house was allegedly owned by a "Hokwan," police said.

PDEA operatives were on the trail of Joey Lim from 5th avenue in Caloocan City to Bulacan, revealing to WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong.

Police also arrested 3 other Chinese men—brothers Nelson and Charlie Go.

Bulaong said the Malabon house served as a major distribution point for drugs in the Metropolis area.

He said Lim had been under surveillance for over a month.

Yesterday, a lawman pretending to be a buyer and asked Lim to sell him drugs. The suspect did not know that when he took the undercover man to Bulacan, he was being followed by several anti-narcotics agents.

A highly-placed source in the PDEA yesterday said that the seized drugs were imported from Taiwan and China and were brought in through the country's seaports. With a report from Tarcoola Reyes, PDI Central Luzon Bureau Desk

GOVERNMENT is not out to prosecute teenage drug offenders, it's there to help them, according to the President. Here, a doctor holds on to a smile sample as he leads a Manila High School student to the campus clinic.

## Private schools more worrisome, says DoH

By Marichu Rivera

THE PRESIDENT yesterday announced that public schools in Metro Manila are "statistically clean" as government winds up its random drug testing in 17 schools in the National Capital Region.

According to the initial information gathered from the first 15 schools tested, the prevalence rate of drug use ranged from zero to six percent in Metro Manila public schools...lower than the 10 percent prevalence rate in 1989.

But this year's testing showed that while public schools are relatively drug-free, private schools are not. Dangerous rate of health scares revealed that a private school in Manila registered up to 15 percent drug use among its students.

President Macapagal-Arroyo, who was at the Manila High School yesterday to discuss the anti-illegal drugs campaign, said that the drug testing was "not an investigation," but part of data gathering for the government's nationwide drug intervention campaign.

Health Secretary Manuel Dayrit yesterday stressed that the random mandatory drug tests are not meant to be punitive and does not seek to address the problem on an individual level.

He said that the random tests are mainly for identification of possible problem areas, and the prevalence of drug use among students in a particular area.

Manila High School, which has 3,000 students, is the 16th school to be tested.

The DOH and the Department of Education (DepEd) would move on to schools in region 3 next week.

"The methodology is meant to be confidential so that the students would not be stigmatized," Dayrit said.

The DOH gets urine samples of 20 students from the school randomly selected by a computer from DepEd.

The samples are not labeled so that students who would test positive would not be known. Dayrit said that if an area has been determined to have a drug problem, the DOH would launch an intervention program there.

## QC judge inhibits self from Arboretum case

A QUEZON City judge has inhibited himself from handling the land dispute case between the University of the Philippines and Ilustrian claimants to the 70-hectare Arboretum property in Diliman, Quezon City.

In a three-page order, Judge Rogelio Pizarro of Regional Trial Court Branch 222 granted the motion for inhibition filed by the UP Diliman Legal Office to remove doubts that the judge is biased.

The case was raffled off to Judge Pizarro Oct. 17 by the Quezon City Hall of Justice.

The defendant, UP Diliman police chief Nemie Balmaceda, claimed that Pizarro would not act with complete impartiality on the land dispute case because of the administrative and criminal cases that the university had filed against him.

Balmaceda and Pizarro's partiality in favor of plaintiffs Abdulcad Ilustrian and Lilia Matar is evident in the judge's failure to resolve the motions of UP to dismiss and quash the writ of preliminary injunction.

Instead, the judge issued an order on Sept. 30 ordering Balmaceda and UP officials to follow the writ, which prohibited them from entering the disputed property that covers parts of the UP Arboretum and the National Hydraulic Research Center.

But Pizarro argued that the purpose of the issuance of the order was to maintain the status quo and avoid violence from erupting, since Balmaceda was bent on driving away Dimapasoc and other Muslim families from the Arboretum. Pino Gonzales

## Court stops MWSI debt payments

By Tina Santos

THE QUEZON City Regional Trial Court (QC-RTC) has stopped creditors and other parties from making claims against the Manila Water Services Inc. as the water firm sought corporate rehabilitation.

In a four-page Stay Order dated Nov. 17, Judge Bernadito Ibuna of the QC-RTC Branch 90 granted Maynilad's creditors from collecting payment from the water firm.

Maynilad sought relief from the court on May 15 after the Paris-based ICC International Court of Arbitration ordered it to pay ₱6.75 billion in concession fees to the Manila Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS).

However, the court order also covers parties with claims against Maynilad.

In the meantime, the court directed Maynilad's suppliers to continue rendering services to the company for its rawinesses operation.

The court set the initial hearing on the petition for rehabilitation on Jan. 7.

In its petition, Maynilad said that despite its total assets of P18,663,398,329.61 as of Oct. 31, it foresees an impossibility of meeting its maturing debts.

It also sought a suspension of debt payments as it undertakes "corporate rehabilitation."

It said that on the basis of projected market conditions for the next nine years up to 2012, it has a good chance of being rehabilitated.

In relation to the payments due to the MWSS, Maynilad is seeking the rescheduling and restructuring of its unpaid concession fees with interest at zero percent per year.

The court appointed lawyer and accountant Honorio Bautista to evaluate the rehabilitation plan.

## MetroBriefs

### Murdered in motel

### Swat to attack

### Mayor's cousin

### Bar room brawl

# And ABC-5 makes three

**DID YOU KNOW...** When Mike Enriquez was rescued by beauty consultant at Ellen's on Timog Avenue in Quezon City, Mike Canada, Brenske Johnson, 25, enjoyed having her nails polished, but wanted to keep her tan. Her dark-skinned counterparts, however, had skin-whitening facials. Ellen's most popular beauty regimen, even among local beauty queens, like Melanie Marquez.

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FOR many years now, Philippine television has been dominated by two major networks, ABS-CBN and GMA. Time was when ABS-CBN was way ahead, but in the past few years, GMA has been able to make some inroads into the Kapuso network's comfortable lead.

In any case, it's pretty much always been ABS-CBN and GMA making much of the money, with everybody else setting for siscom position.

Now this year, however, viewers may be seeing a drastic reconfiguration of the situation. That's because Manny Villamayor's group has just bought ABC-5, and is expected to infuse a lot of money into the expansion of its operations and its programs' attractiveness to sponsors and televiewers. When that kind of money talks, everybody pays attention.

At this early stage, we don't know what the reinvigorated channel's competitive thrust will be, but it's fair to say that, once it starts the new phase in its operations, it should quickly become the third largest player on the TV menu.

However, it's also logical to believe that ABC won't be settling for third place for long. Serious money means serious intentions, so ABS-CBN and GMA now have to worry not just about beating each other in the ratings, but also about this new, rich and ambitious kid on the video block. ....More sleepless nights!

It's a given that the new guys at ABC are also hard at work, trying to figure out how they can make inroads into the two leading networks' popularity.

In the past, ABS-CBN used to be known for local shows, while GMA favored imports. Lately, however, they competed head-to-head with mostly local productions. And, these days, their competition has become so intense that Channel 7 does pretty much what Channel 2 is doing, and vice versa.

They must feel that this is the best way to unseat the greatest number of viewers and then to remain on top. Will the new ABC also opt to compete with the two market leaders, or else settle for its (old) niches, more unexpected and fresher ticf?

If ABC does pretty much what ABS-CBN and GMA are doing now, it'll have to become competitive by getting the biggest stars, the best production values, and the widest technological audience minds.

But the two established networks have already signed up the major stars, so ABC may have to build up its own corps of popular players, but that would take time. The other two plus factors could be more easily addressed.

Still, they wouldn't decisively tip the balance in favor of the newly revitalized network. So, the key competition would be in the area of programming. Existing TV formats are popular with viewers, but they've been on the screen for a long time now, so the TV audience would be ready for something really new.

If ABC's think tank can figure out what that is, great. If not, local TV's new (late) entry will have to work much harder to beat ABS-CBN and GMA at their own game.

**'Simpleng Hiling'**

CHANNEL 2's new public service show, "Simpleng Hiling," is a cross between a magazine program and a wish-fulfillment show. Host Karen Davila looks into the lives of the needy to discover the stories behind the wishes they want fulfilled on the program.

"Simpleng Hiling," which is telecast every Saturday at 4:30 p.m., also seeks to change the lives of the people it touches, helping them help themselves to move on to a better future beyond basic material needs.

The show is followed by "Serbi" at 4:30 p.m., and "Star in a Million" is telecast at 5:30.

**Brian McKnight in Concert**

BRIAN McKnight will perform at Bayo Filipino in Clark Field, Pampanga, on Dec. 5, and at the Araneta Coliseum on Dec. 6. McKnight's hits include "One Last Cry," "Back at One," "The Way Love Goes," "Love Is," "Anytime," "You Should Be Mine" and "I'm Sorry."

McKnight has several awards in his name: American Music Award for Best R&B Male Solo, NAACP Award as Outstanding Artist, Soul Train Music Award for Best Male Solo Artist, plus multiple Grammy, MTV Music Video, Soul and Blockbuster award nominations.

The special guests in his concert here are Sarah Geronimo and Rivalo Escalante. Call Ticketworld at 687-3883.

Araneta Center

ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX 7

Ali 1
Ali 2
Ali 3
Ali 4
Ali 5
Ali 6
Ali 7

ARANETA COLISEUM

Disney on Ice
Dec. 12 "Beauty & The Beast"

BUY YOUR TICKETS EARLY TO GET THE BEST SEATS!

CUE TICKETWORLD 891-9999

NOW SHOWING

MTRCB RATING PG-13 Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult

"VISUAL POETRY"
RICHARD ROEPER, EBERT & ROEPER

"THE SPECIAL EFFECTS ARE TRULY AWESOME. SENSATIONAL ACTION"
ROGER EBERT, EBERT & ROEPER

MATRIX REVOLUTIONS

KEANU REEVES LAURENCE FISHBURNE CARRIE-ANNE MOSS

WARNER BROS. PICTURES PRESENTS
IN ASSOCIATION WITH VILLAGE ROADSHOW PICTURES AND NPV ENTERTAINMENT A SILVER PICTURES PRODUCTION
KEANU REEVES LAURENCE FISHBURNE CARRIE-ANNE MOSS "THE MATRIX REVOLUTIONS" HUGO WEAVING JADA PINKETT SMITH
"TU DOR DAVIS JOSEPH MACHWOSKI LARRY MACHWOSKI GRANT HILL ANDREW MASON AND BRUCE BERMAN
JOEL SILVER WRITTEN & DIRECTED BY THE WACHOWSKI BROTHERS

Soundtrack Album on Warner Sunset / Maverick Records

NO. 1 GHOST MOVIE IN ASIA!

ARE YOU PREPARED FOR THE MOST HORRIFYINGVIEWING EXPERIENCE?

WARNING!
THIS FILM SO FRIGHTENING YOU MIGHT GIVE UP WATCHING HALFWAY THROUGH... SO WE DARE YOU TO FINISH IT ALIVE!!!

The Grudge
JU-ON

Watch for it Nov. 26

R-13 2nd HIT WEEK!

MAKE SURE YOU'RE READY FOR THE MOST TERRIFYING ACTUAL EXPERIENCE!!

What Is It That Pulls People Into The Darkness To Be Scared To Death?

THE WISHER

starring DREW LACHEY of 98 Degrees

NOW SHOWING EXCLUSIVELY AT Artfilm

Monsoon Wedding

"TWO THUMBS WAY UP"

The country's one and only private cinema.
Now it can be yours.

mycinema

# BUSINESS

E-mail at business@inquirer.com.ph
Website www.inquirer.net/business

Editor Raul O. Marcelo
Business Editor Gavin S. Mariano

# Court puts Maynilad under receivership

By Dara C. Dantao

THE QUEZON City Regional Trial Court has placed the Lopezes' beleaguered Maynilad Water Services Inc. under receivership, thus preventing it from the state-owned Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System as well as other creditors which may collect on $350 million worth of debts.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, Manila Electric Co., Maynilad's parent firm, Benpres Holdings Corp. said branch 90 of the RTC issued on Nov. 17 an order granting its petition for court protection.

The court also appointed Rosario Heracleo, managing partner of Heracleo, Morales Law offices and of the accounting firm RG Heracleo and Associates, as rehabilitation receiver for Maynilad.

The order effectively suspended the enforcement of all claims — whether for money or otherwise and whether such enforcement is by court action or otherwise — against the petitioner, its guarantors and sureties not solidarily liable with Maynilad.

Benpres chief operating officer Angel Ong added that that the order effectively prevented the unowned 399505 from drawing on Maynilad's performance bond.

The International arbitration Court last week ordered Maynilad to pay P6.77 billion in dues to the government and ordered its petition to terminate its 25-year water concession agreement with the MWSS.

MWSS was likewise allowed by the arbitrators to claim on the P1.029 million performance bond put up by Maynilad when it bid for the franchise in 1997. Benpres guarantees 60 percent of the bond while the balance of 40 percent is guaranteed by joint-venture partner Ondeo-Degremont group of France.

The initial hearing on the petition for corporate rehabilitation was set on Jan. 7, 2004.

Benpres, which owns 29 percent of the outstanding capital stock of Maynilad, earlier said the measure to the worst-case scenario in the event of non-extension of its concession agreement.

Aside from the MWSS, Maynilad is indebted to foreign lenders like Citibank NA, Credit Lyonnais, Chase Manhattan, Credit Industriel et Commercial Trust Bank and RBC Bank PC.

Maynilad covers the west zone of the MWSS concession consisting of Manila, Pasay, Las Piñas, Makati, Muntinlupa, Valenzuela, Navotas, Pateros, Parañaque, Bacoor, Kawit, Imus, Cavite City, Noveleta, Rosario and parts of Tagaig and Quezon City.

## San Miguel obtains investment license from Vietnam

SAN Miguel Corp., Southeast Asia's biggest food and beverage conglomerate, is set to expand its foothold in fast-growing Vietnam after obtaining an investment license in the country's southern province Dong Nai.

In a disclosure to the Philippine Stock Exchange yesterday, SMC chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. said the investment license would allow the company to be part of Cong Nuli economic growth and prosperity.

He said SMC's plan is to expand in that country underscored the company's faith in Vietnam and its economy is investing in its future.

"Vietnam's growth in the past few years and ability to deal with a difficult economic environment have been admirable. While most regional markets reeled from the Asian financial crisis, Vietnam

WEAK DEMAND

# UCC losses widen to ₱301M in Q3

By Elena R. Torijos

UNION Cement Corp. posted a consolidated net loss of P368 million in the third quarter of the year due to traditionally weak demand for cement during the period.

Industry demand during the third quarter is usually weak due to the onset of the rainy season, but figures showed that sales were even lower this year at 2.83 million tons, 3.6 percent below the sales last year.

This partly explains the increase in UCC's losses in the third quarter this year to P368 million against P207 million recorded in the same period last year.

Total industry sales for the first nine months of the year reached 7 million tons, slightly lower than the 9.1 million tons posted in the same period last year.

Selling pricesd remain, on the order hand, stained to recover to August but remained below 2002 levels.

UCC said generated revenue of P2.6 billion in the third quarter, bringing total sales for the first nine months to P7.3 billion.

Earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization rose by more than 56 percent to P937 million from P596 million following the consolidation of its operations with 40 years Cemenar, the recovery in selling prices and the reduction in fixed costs compared to the same period last year, UCC said.

UCC added that it expected "more stability" in its financial status wanting Cemenar as it starts drawing funds from its long-term credit facilities.

The company predicted that construction activity would remain driven by the private sector.

"On a macro level, the downgrading of the country's rating by Moody's from stable to negative may have some impact on the country's economy. Issuers of sovereign securities are the external payment position and the forgetful [P2012] billion budget deficit," UCC said.

Chic Uniforms, Inc.
Uniforms at Affordable Prices!!!
Dressing People Smarter; Helps Business Prosper!!!
Visit or Call Us at:

For reply coupon to: 528-02-34 or mail to:
Philippine Daily Inquirer
c/o Circulation Division
Ground Floor, Trinity Building
604 T.M. Kalaw St., Ermita, Manila
I'd like to subscribe to the Philippine Daily Inquirer.
Please have my copy delivered to:
Name
Address
Tel. No.
Signature

## Stocks

year-to-date the index is up 10.4 percent.

After dropping 7.2 percent in the past 10 trading days, the market had been due for a consolidation, traders said.

"We have already experienced a significant decline in the past 14 trading days and that has allowed us to consolidate now. Technically, we are at a level where some bargain hunting was expected," said Oliver Huyssteen, head of sales at Asian Equities Inc.

However, weakness in key regional markets capped buying interest.

"I think in terms of sentiment we are still being affected by the downturn in the Nikkei (Japan's main stock index) and other regionals," Pineda said.

Looking ahead, further light bargain hunting was likely after the recent sell-downs which should help spur modest gains in the broad market.

"I would not be surprised if we see some more bargain hunting coming in and the consolidation today would likely be in index-heavy counters that have been battered recently," said Pineda.

PLDT slipped again as profit-takers continued to exit one of the stock after it hit its highest levels since February 2001 earlier this month.

"Right now it's understandable after the significant uptick we have seen in the stock in the year to date," said Pineda.

PLDT shares are up 141.4 percent this year, outperforming the main index by 131 percent.

The country's largest conglomerate, Ayala Corp., fell 2 percent to P4.80 on further profit taking.

Reuters

## DISCLOSURES

**GAB (Rizal Properties Inc.** will hold its annual stockholders' meeting on Dec. 11 with record date on Dec. 3.

***

**ATALA Land Inc.** will issue P2 billion worth of bonds on Nov. 21. These will be offered to the public from Nov. 11 to 21. The bonds will mature in five years and one day from date of issue.

***

**PHILIPPINE Dahaka Corp.** said it received a Certificate of Sale issued by the Ex-officio Sheriff of Makati City for the mortgage sale of a company-owned car lent against a bank debt amounting to P288 million. The company said it could lose P1.09 million unless the case is resolved with finality in its favor. Because of this, the company will pursue legal action at all costs.

***

**BENPRES Holdings Corp.** disclosed the French SE of Quezon City Regional Trial Court issued a Stay Order in relation to Mayaffal Water Services Inc.'s petition for corporate rehabilitation. Rosario Bernaldo was appointed rehabilitation receiver. Compiled by Alastair U. Cuizon, PID Research

## CURRENCIES

| Country | Unit | Buy (equivalent) | Sell (equivalent) | Peso (equivalent) |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| United States | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 55.500 |
| Japan | Yen | 100 | 100 | 51.000 |
| United Kingdom | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Australia | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 37.000 |
| Switzerland | Franc | 1 | 1 | 41.000 |
| Canada | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 41.000 |
| Singapore | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 31.000 |
| Hong Kong | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 7.100 |
| Denmark | Krone | 1 | 1 | 7.400 |
| Norway | Krone | 1 | 1 | 7.000 |
| Sweden | Krona | 1 | 1 | 6.000 |
| New Zealand | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Bahrain | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 147.000 |
| Kuwait | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 180.000 |
| Saudi Arabia | Riyal | 1 | 1 | 14.800 |
| United Arab Emirates | Dirham | 1 | 1 | 15.100 |
| Qatar | Riyal | 1 | 1 | 15.200 |
| Taiwan | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 1.600 |
| South Korea | Won | 1,000 | 1,000 | 46.000 |
| Sri Lanka | Rupee | 100 | 100 | 55.000 |
| Thailand | Baht | 100 | 100 | 130.000 |
| China | Yuan | 1 | 1 | 6.700 |
| Indonesia | Rupiah | 10,000 | 10,000 | 55.000 |
| Malaysia | Ringgit | 1 | 1 | 14.500 |
| Brunei | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Vietnam | Dong | 1,000 | 1,000 | 3.500 |
| Laos | Kip | 1,000 | 1,000 | 5.000 |
| Cambodia | Riel | 1,000 | 1,000 | 14.000 |
| Myanmar | Kyat | 100 | 100 | 5.000 |
| India | Rupee | 100 | 100 | 120.000 |
| Pakistan | Rupee | 100 | 100 | 95.000 |
| Nepal | Rupee | 100 | 100 | 75.000 |
| Bangladesh | Taka | 100 | 100 | 80.000 |
| Mauritius | Rupee | 100 | 100 | 180.000 |
| Fiji | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 30.000 |
| Papua New Guinea | Kina | 1 | 1 | 16.000 |
| Solomon Islands | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 7.000 |
| Vanuatu | Vatu | 100 | 100 | 45.000 |
| Samoa | Tala | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| Tonga | Pa'anga | 1 | 1 | 23.000 |
| Kiribati | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Micronesia | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Marshall Islands | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Palau | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Guam | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Northern Mariana Islands | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| American Samoa | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Cook Islands | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Niue | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Tokelau | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Tuvalu | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Nauru | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 32.000 |
| Wallis and Futuna | Franc | 1 | 1 | 41.000 |
| French Polynesia | Franc | 1 | 1 | 41.000 |
| New Caledonia | Franc | 1 | 1 | 41.000 |
| Andorra | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Monaco | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| San Marino | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Vatican City | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Slovenia | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Slovakia | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Estonia | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Latvia | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Lithuania | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Malta | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Cyprus | Euro | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Bulgaria | Lev | 1 | 1 | 28.000 |
| Romania | Leu | 1 | 1 | 1.600 |
| Turkey | Lira | 1 | 1 | 35.000 |
| Russia | Ruble | 1 | 1 | 1.700 |
| Ukraine | Hryvnia | 1 | 1 | 10.000 |
| Belarus | Ruble | 1 | 1 | 26.000 |
| Moldova | Leu | 1 | 1 | 4.000 |
| Georgia | Lari | 1 | 1 | 25.000 |
| Armenia | Dram | 1 | 1 | 0.100 |
| Azerbaijan | Manat | 1 | 1 | 65.000 |
| Kazakhstan | Tenge | 1 | 1 | 0.400 |
| Kyrgyzstan | Som | 1 | 1 | 1.300 |
| Tajikistan | Somoni | 1 | 1 | 18.000 |
| Turkmenistan | Manat | 1 | 1 | 10.000 |
| Uzbekistan | Som | 1 | 1 | 0.050 |
| Mongolia | Tugrik | 1 | 1 | 0.040 |
| Iran | Rial | 1 | 1 | 0.006 |
| Iraq | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 0.040 |
| Jordan | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 78.000 |
| Lebanon | Pound | 1 | 1 | 0.037 |
| Syria | Pound | 1 | 1 | 1.100 |
| Israel | Shekel | 1 | 1 | 12.000 |
| Egypt | Pound | 1 | 1 | 9.000 |
| Libya | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 42.000 |
| Tunisia | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 41.000 |
| Algeria | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 0.750 |
| Morocco | Dirham | 1 | 1 | 5.200 |
| Mauritania | Ouguiya | 1 | 1 | 0.200 |
| Senegal | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Mali | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Burkina Faso | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Niger | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Ivory Coast | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Guinea | Franc | 1,000 | 1,000 | 6.500 |
| Guinea-Bissau | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Liberia | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 55.000 |
| Sierra Leone | Leone | 1,000 | 1,000 | 18.000 |
| Ghana | Cedi | 10,000 | 10,000 | 60.000 |
| Togo | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Benin | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Nigeria | Naira | 100 | 100 | 42.000 |
| Cameroon | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Chad | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Central African Republic | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Equatorial Guinea | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Gabon | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Congo | CFA Franc | 100 | 100 | 8.500 |
| Zaire | Franc | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.060 |
| Angola | Kwanza | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.700 |
| Zambia | Kwacha | 1,000 | 1,000 | 8.000 |
| Zimbabwe | Dollar | 100 | 100 | 0.700 |
| Namibia | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 7.000 |
| Botswana | Pula | 1 | 1 | 10.000 |
| Lesotho | Loti | 1 | 1 | 7.000 |
| Swaziland | Lilangeni | 1 | 1 | 7.000 |
| Malawi | Kwacha | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.500 |
| Mozambique | Metical | 1,000 | 1,000 | 2.000 |
| Madagascar | Ariary | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.020 |
| Comoros | Franc | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.100 |
| Mauritius | Rupee | 100 | 100 | 180.000 |
| Seychelles | Rupee | 100 | 100 | 9.000 |
| Djibouti | Franc | 100 | 100 | 30.000 |
| Somalia | Shilling | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.060 |
| Ethiopia | Birr | 100 | 100 | 6.000 |
| Eritrea | Nakfa | 100 | 100 | 4.000 |
| Sudan | Dinar | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.200 |
| Kenya | Shilling | 100 | 100 | 70.000 |
| Uganda | Shilling | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.050 |
| Tanzania | Shilling | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.050 |
| Rwanda | Franc | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.100 |
| Burundi | Franc | 1,000 | 1,000 | 0.050 |
| Haiti | Gourde | 100 | 100 | 140.000 |
| Jamaica | Dollar | 100 | 100 | 90.000 |
| Trinidad and Tobago | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 8.800 |
| Barbados | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 28.000 |
| Bahamas | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 55.500 |
| Cayman Islands | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 67.000 |
| Bermuda | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 55.500 |
| Antigua and Barbuda | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| Dominica | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| Grenada | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| St. Kitts and Nevis | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| St. Lucia | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| St. Vincent and the Grenadines | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| Anguilla | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| Montserrat | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| Aruba | Florin | 1 | 1 | 31.000 |
| Netherlands Antilles | Guilder | 1 | 1 | 31.000 |
| Belize | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 28.000 |
| Guatemala | Quetzal | 1 | 1 | 7.000 |
| El Salvador | Colon | 1 | 1 | 6.400 |
| Honduras | Lempira | 1 | 1 | 2.800 |
| Nicaragua | Cordoba | 1 | 1 | 2.800 |
| Costa Rica | Colon | 100 | 100 | 10.000 |
| Panama | Balboa | 1 | 1 | 55.500 |
| Colombia | Peso | 1,000 | 1,000 | 20.000 |
| Venezuela | Bolivar | 1,000 | 1,000 | 25.000 |
| Guyana | Dollar | 1 | 1 | 0.300 |
| Suriname | Guilder | 1 | 1 | 20.000 |
| Ecuador | Sucre | 1,000 | 1,000 | 55.500 |
| Peru | Nuevo Sol | 1 | 1 | 16.000 |
| Brazil | Real | 1 | 1 | 19.000 |
| Bolivia | Boliviano | 1 | 1 | 7.000 |
| Paraguay | Guarani | 1,000 | 1,000 | 9.000 |
| Chile | Peso | 100 | 100 | 7.500 |
| Uruguay | Peso | 1 | 1 | 2.000 |
| Argentina | Peso | 1 | 1 | 19.000 |
| Falkland Islands | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| South Georgia | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Saint Helena | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Ascension Island | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Tristan da Cunha | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Gibraltar | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Jersey | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Guernsey | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Isle of Man | Pound | 1 | 1 | 87.000 |
| Faroe Islands | Krone | 1 | 1 | 7.400 |
| Greenland | Krone | 1 | 1 | 7.400 |
| Iceland | Krona | 1 | 1 | 0.700 |
| Liechtenstein | Franc | 1 | 1 | 41.000 |
| Albania | Lek | 1 | 1 | 0.400 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Mark | 1 | 1 | 28.000 |
| Croatia | Kuna | 1 | 1 | 7.400 |
| Macedonia | Denar | 1 | 1 | 0.900 |
| Serbia and Montenegro | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 0.700 |
| Czech Republic | Koruna | 1 | 1 | 1.700 |
| Hungary | Forint | 100 | 100 | 22.000 |
| Poland | Zloty | 1 | 1 | 14.000 |
| Albania | Lek | 1 | 1 | 0.400 |
| Bosnia and Herzegovina | Mark | 1 | 1 | 28.000 |
| Croatia | Kuna | 1 | 1 | 7.400 |
| Macedonia | Denar | 1 | 1 | 0.900 |
| Serbia and Montenegro | Dinar | 1 | 1 | 0.700 |
| Czech Republic | Koruna | 1 | 1 | 1.700 |
| Hungary | Forint | 100 | 100 | 22.000 |
| Poland | Zloty | 1 | 1 | 14.000 |

# PBCom expects profit in 2003

By Elena R. Sevilla

THE PHILIPPINE Bank of Communications, a publicly listed commercial bank owned largely by the Ongpin, Tan and Yujuico families, expects to end the year with a profit despite the loss of P85 million recorded in the first nine months of the year.

"Maybe we look some lower because we spent a lot on investments but we still expect to be positive by year end. We have a lot of income coming in from treasury," PBCom president Isidro Alcantara said in an interview.

Meanwhile, a PBCom director said family members of one of the bank's three major shareholders, said the consortium never has any to merge PBCom with another bank or sell their stake to the company despite several offers and suggestions by the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas.

PBCom has repeatedly received merger offers from Banco de Oro Universal Bank, Metropolitan Bank & Trust Co., Bank Commercial Bank and Security Bank.

Negotiations, however, did not prosper.

CONVEYORS

BE A DnD FRANCHISEE

Public Auction

Plant Facility Equipment

Computer & Security Systems

Office Furniture & Canteen

Information

Listings and photos online...

0.917.47.7915 www.robin.com

# Nazareno says top post at PLDT a great challenge

By Abigail L. Ho

A SOLDIER always rises to whatever challenges a battle may bring.

Napoleon Nazareno, the man at the helm of cellular giant Smart Communications Inc., likens himself to a soldier who will take on whatever new battles his superior and his company will order him to take on.

Reacting to reports that Manuel Pangilinan, president and chief executive of Smart's parent firm Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., had recommended him to take over the PLDT presidency next year, he said he would go by the wishes of the PLDT board, whatever these might be.

"I go by what he has said, as quoted in newspaper reports. But it's still up to the PLDT board to decide...I feel challenged. I'm a good soldier," he told reporters at the sidelines of the turnover of P20 million worth of wireless equipment to the Ateneo De Manila University yesterday.

PANGILINAN

NAZARENO

Two weeks ago, Pangilinan disclosed that he was already preparing to relinquish his post as president and chief executive of the country's dominant carrier.

To take his place, he mentioned Nazareno, the man largely responsible for catapulting Smart to the top position it occupies now in the country's cellular market.

However, he said Nazareno would step on as president and chief executive of Smart, remaining, holding the same position at PLDT.

Eight now, Pangilinan said no other name has cropped up in terms of a possible replacement for him. He added that, at this point, he did not see any other person worthy of the position, at least in his personal opinion.

"He's flat only one. I see right now. The others may have other people in mind, but for me, he's right for the job," he said.

Nazareno said he believed "there were a lot of good men out there" other than himself who would be considered for the PLDT presidency.

However, if the PLDT board should decide to entrust that position to him, he would, like a good soldier, rise to the challenge.

"It's really up to the board to decide," he said.

Pangilinan, on the other hand, would likely stay on as PLDT chair, taking the place of current chair Antonio "Tonyboy" Cojuangco, who had decided to focus on his recently acquired television station, associated broadcasting (ABC).

Eight now, Pangilinan said no other name has cropped up in terms of a possible replacement for him. He added that, at this point, he did not see any other

# Smart donates ₱20M worth of telecom equipment to Ateneo

DILUCLAR giant Smart Communications Inc. yesterday turned over around P20 million worth of wireless services equipment to the Ateneo De Manila University in a drive to help improve engineering education in the country.

The equipment donations was in line with the Smart Wireless Engineering Scholarship Program (Swesp) that was established to help enhance engineering education by giving students hands-on experience with some of the latest equipment in the wireless industry.

Aimed at producing more graduates specializing in wireless technology, the 14th beneficiary-school of the program, with another six schools soon to benefit from the Smart initiative by year's end, Smart president and chief executive Napoleon Nazareno said in an interview yesterday.

By next year, Smart aimed to set up 20 more wireless laboratories in various colleges and universities all over the country, he added.

"Through this program, Smart's hopes to help raise the standard of [electronics and communications engineering] education," he said.

The Swesp has two components: hardware and software. On the hardware side, Smart has donated various radio base stations and other equipment for use in the Ateneo wireless lab, including a Nokia 40-meter, the latest cell site in the industry today.

Ateneo's ECE students will be able to actually see how an Ultra site work instead of just knowing what one looks like and how one functions.

On the software side, Nazareno said Smart's participation would embed lectures on wireless technology.

Lectures and presentations will cover global system for mobile communications, short messaging service or text messaging, general packet radio service (GPRS) as well as other new technologies that may develop in the future.

"We want to help students get a more realistic understanding of the field of ECE. This will be done through the wireless lab and also through the sharing of practical experiences of our engineers in setting and operating the country's most extensive digital mobile phone," Nazareno said. Abigail L. Ho


Bid software piracy goodbye.

We're giving you time to comply.

The Business Software Alliance (BSA) is giving companies time to review their software licenses and adopt proper software asset management (SAM) in their business to prevent the use of unlicensed software. Join the **BSA Software Compliancy Program**, a unique opportunity for companies to be fully compliant without any threat of legal action from the BSA. The program is BSA's latest initiative in promoting the importance of respect for intellectual property rights, which is a key driving force for the economy.*

Registration to the program is 100% free. Just follow these easy steps:

1. Conduct software audit in your company. Download free audit tool from the BSA website at **www.bsa.org/philippines**.
2. Legalize or delete any unlicensed software you may have.
3. Fill out Software Compliancy Declaration Form available at the BSA Software Compliancy Secretariat or visit website at **www.bsa.org/philippines**.
4. Send declaration form to BSA to PO Box 3335 MCPO Makati on or before **December 3, 2003**. You may also fax the declaration form at **891-3431** or send by e-mail to **compliancy@perceptions-inc.com**.
5. Receive notification from the BSA Software Compliancy Secretariat and get a 90-day grace period.

For more details, call the BSA Software Compliancy Program hotline at **893-7354**, e-mail to **compliancy@perceptions-inc.com** or visit **www.bsa.org/philippines**.

Be free from software piracy and increase your company's productivity.

*A 2002 IDC study showed that a 10-point reduction in software piracy rate in the Philippines, from 63% to 53%, in four years, could add P19.2 billion to the economy, create 2,000 new high-wage jobs and generate more than P7 billion in new tax revenues.

BSA
BUSINESS SOFTWARE ALLIANCE

This ad is brought to you by:
autodesk macromedia

BSA MEMBERS:
ADOBE • APPLE • AUTODESK • AVID • BENTLEY SYSTEMS • BORLAND • CNC SOFTWARE / MASTERCAM • EDS PLM SOLUTIONS • INFINITE SECURITY SYSTEMS • MACROMEDIA • MICROSOFT • NETWORK ASSOCIATES • ROBERT MCNEEL & ASSOCIATES • SOLIDWORKS • SYMANTEC


# La Suerte scales down operations

By Michelle V. Ramos

LA SUERTE Cigar and Cigarette Factory has partially shut down operations after the 20-day temporary restraining order issued against Revenue Regulation 22-2003, which increased the taxes imposed on some cigarette brands by as much as 400 percent, lapsed last week.

The TRO was issued by the Parañaque Regional Trial Court following claims by La Suerte that the BIR regulation would force it to lay off workers and face possible closure.

According to a company official, La Suerte has stopped the production of Memphis and Astro cigarette brands and has refrained from releasing its remaining old stock from its warehouses since Nov. 21 due to the revenue regulation's impact on the cigarettes' prices.

Astro and Memphis brands, both of which account for majority of La Suerte's production, are the only brands that the firm has been introduced to the market after 1996.

La Suerte said the new tax rates imposed by the revenue regulation would increase the price of Memphis and Astro brands from a range of P7.40 to P7.80 per pack, to a range of P12.30 to P13. It said the new prices would make Mighty, Astro and Astro family cigarettes and other local brands the most above P9 per pack.

Under the revenue regulation, cigarettes introduced after 1996 will have the following tax rates: P13.44 excise tax for cigarette brands whose net retail price is P 8/per pack; P8.96 for those that cost P6.50 to P 8/ per pack; P5.60 for cigarettes brands worth P5 to P6.50 per pack, and P1.12 for those that cost less than P5.

# San Miguel . . .

(Continued from B1)

stayed true to its course," Cojuangco said.

Cojuangco also lauded the Vietnamese government's focus, leadership and capability as the economy recovered to register robust growth during the SARS outbreak, which dampened business in many Asian economies.

Dong Nai province is located in the country's part of South Vietnam, with an area of 5,862.77 square kilometers, accounting for 1.76 percent of the nation's total area. The province boasts a robust industry and services sectors, which both an annual average economic growth of 12 percent.

SMC did not specify what kind of business it would put up in Dong Nai.

SMC's presence in Vietnam goes back to 1996 when its brewery San Miguel Brewery Vietnam Ltd. in Nha Trang began operations. That same year, San Miguel Pec Tin Packaging Co. started making metal closures and caps, while San Miguel Yamamura Hailphong Glass Co. began producing and marketing glass containers.

Recently, SMC also completed its purchase of TTC Thomson Ltd., a company with big fame and steel milling operations in Binh Duong.

It was earlier reported that SMC was also keen on acquiring a controlling stake in Vietnamese soft drink bottler Coca-Cola Industrie Pte. Ltd., a unit of Singapore's Fraser & Neave Ltd.

SMC has likewise recently acquired an industrial estate in Thailand and announced it was in talks to acquire the China-based breweries of Malaysian conglomerate Lion group.

All these moves are in line with SMC's bid for regional expansion in areas where Asia Pacific countries, Arabic from Vietnam, the conglomerate hopes to establish a formidable foothold in China, Australia, Indonesia, Cambodia, Thailand and Malaysia.

After dominating the Philippine food and beverage market, SMC's next avenue for growth is for regional expansion, which is about $500 million for its regional expansion. Doris C. Dumlao

# French disconnection

THE FRENCH advertising giant Publicis is condemning its own justification campaign against its rebellious Philippine partners by **unmasking their officers and lines throwing the Filipinos out.**

According to the grapevine, a group of heavy-clad security men, dressed by a visiting French executive, **rumbled through the** rolling and forcibly ejected Monday morning **the locked offices and drawers of Publicitas/MBS chair Joselito de Joya and chief financial officer Lina Marable.**

De Joya and Marable, who had not yet arrived for work, were later so persuaded by armed guards entering the Publicitas/MBS offices at the ISM building in Lim, Ortigas City.

In a result of the break-in, the entire accounting and administrative staff of Publicitas/MBS also walked out in sympathy with their long-time local bosses.

Monday's turndown is but the latest of tactical strategy undertaken by Publicis **to wrest control of** employed as a result of a boardroom struggle among erstwhile partners, who only **four years ago merged amid a blaze of publicity.**

It is not clear what precipitated the break-up, but the Aldo Cha former Advertising and Marketing Association Corp has now gone to court **accusing the French multinational of willfully** breaching the constitutional ownership ceiling **through the use of Filipino dummies.**

With lawsuits and counter-lawsuits being **filed, the Paris-based giant locally formed a lo**cal agency, Publicis Manila, through local lawyers, and proceeded to transfer the Nestlé and other brand-and-honey accounts. Nestlé alone has an advertising budget of P1.4 billion.

As of the last count, Publicis/MBS has been left with Bleuskies, Isuzu Life, Mendez Perfumes, T-Eleven, and Elevaj accounts, although, according to the grapevine, the said accounts are now in the process of also being transferred to the new Publicis agency.

## Belgian diplomacy

ANOTHER French-speaking country, Belgium, has given the Filipinos its own brand of **hard-ball diplomacy.**

Belgian Ambassador Christiane Vaughn left **in September the official Ayala-owned Village** residence he inherited from his predecessor without literally paying the rent.

Although the two-year contract was until the end of 2003, the Belgian embassy paid the Ayala-owned landlord, TV station owner Avida Holdings, only until September. The check payment, which was supposed to have been given a year in advance per contract, was finally handed last week, more than a month after Vaughn formally vacated a French home.

Vaughn claims he has diplomatic immunity, in answer to the breach of contract collection suit filed by Ayalaland.

## Inquirer on TV

THE Inquirer has bought a 30-minute slot on Channel 5 through blockbuster Jewish Films, whose owner is related by consanguinity to the principals of this newspaper.

If things proceed as planned, the Inquirer will produce a daily newscast-talk show for the evening prime time, with interest as branch date. The planned news program will

# Napocor auctions P803M in fuel supply contracts

**By Bernard W Dizengoff**

QUEZON (PNS)—National Power Corp. yesterday auctioned off another batch of contracts worth about P803.2M million for additional fuel supply needs of its oil-based power plants **and barges for the rest of 2003.**

The contracts call for the supply and delivery of 69,981 kiloliters of industrial fuel oil to five delivery points.

Part of the fuel shipments are meant for Napocor's 21-megawatt Bohol power plant in Tagbilaran City and 32-MW Nueva Ecija 104 based in Bulacan.

The contracts also cover the fuel needs of the following Napocor-contracted independent power producers: the 215-MW diesel power plant in Batangas, La Union's 43.8-MW Naga thermal plant in Cebu, and the 100-MW Cotabato plant in Cotabato del Sur.

Oil giants Petron Corp. and Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp. were the only bidders in yesterday's auction.

Petron was the only qualified bidder that offered a tender for P1.2 billion worth of supply contracts covering the requirements of the 620-megawatt combined cycle power plant in Limay, Bataan, and the 100-MW bunker plant in Zambales.

The Bataan contract calls for supply and delivery of 51,167 kiloliters of industrial fuel oil while the Subic contract calls for 12,535 kiloliters.

"Petron's limits are undergoing negotiations. Napocor is trying to lower the prices offers since Petron was the lone bidder," a bidding official said.

Next month, Napocor is bidding out contracts for its fuel needs for 2004, with a budget ceiling of P1.16 billion for diesel and P8.63 billion for bunker "C."

In a memo to suppliers, Napocor said prospective bidders must have a net financial **ownership capacity that is at least equal to** the budget for contract it was vying for.

A pre-bid conference is scheduled on Nov. 25 in the Napocor headquarters in Quezon City.

Also, a mock electronic bidding would be held on Dec. 1-5 before the actual bidding for diesel contracts on Dec. 11 and for industrial fuel oil contracts on Dec. 12.

## COCKTALES

*Victor C. Aganon*

also deprived on what she says Channel 5 principal, telecom heir Antonio Cojuangco III, to reveals to do with the station's news and public affairs programming.

Previous president Alexandra Prieto-Romualdez will discuss details of the protective shave in this weekend's advertising congress in Baguio.

## Heard through the grapevine

PRESIDENTIAL candidate Raul Roco was among the first of the brethren of politicians to pay their respects to Cardo Tan Samartino evening during the first night of the wake of the virtuoso's mother.

(Cocktales may be reached by e-mail at cocktales_pdi@yahoo.com or cc cocktales_pdi@inq7.net.)

54:$1 BY END-2003

# HSBC says peso can still rally

**By Clarissa S. Batino**

FOREIGN bank HSBC yesterday said **the peso would still recover to $1 to a** dollar by year's end provided no more **political bombshells are unleashed** and dollar remittances from overseas **workers flow as strongly as expected.**

HSBC treasurer John McGowan said the bank has not changed its forecast that the peso would rebound to the $1-$1 level by the end of 2003 even as he acknowledged that lingering political jitters were taking a toll on the financial market.

If it was any consolation, Mr. Gowan said the peso was now trading at par with the rankest rate when there used to be a 10 or 50-centavo differential.

The peso yesterday closed at $1.405 to a dollar from $1.41 the previous day.

He said the pressure was most evident on Philippine dollar bonds as spreads widened by as much as 71 basis points as of Nov. 17 compared to early September.

"But even with the uptick, current spreads are still lower compared to where it was in the start of the year," the banker said.

McGowan said that political events that had an impact on the peso included the Oakwood mutiny, the suspension of the central bank governor, and the impeachment case against Chief Justice Hilario Davide Jr.

"The uncertainty (now) like much **on the candidates' (for the May 2004** elections). The market is unsure who **is standing and who is not. And there** is a lack of publication so to what **these potential candidates plan to** do," he said.

In current yields on Philippine dollar bonds, McGowan said offshore investors have wanted to buy back the debt issues they have previously dumped.

As of Nov. 17, the spread on Philippine bonds maturing in 2009 had widened by 72.9 basis points over US treasuries. Debt maturing in 2006 went up by 56.1 basis points, and those maturing in 2023 rose by 51.7 basis points compared to the levels as of Sept. 5.

But compared to the start of the year, spreads dropped by between 88.2 and 130.1 basis points. Spreads represent the yields investors require in return for their placements on Philippine bonds.

# BUSINESS

Canon

Now you can print direct from Canon's new CP-200 & CP-300 PictBridge compatible photo printers.

PictBridge

## October deficit hit ₱21B

By Clarissa S. Balino

INCREASED revenues and disciplined spending put the government's fiscal progress back on track in October as initial figures showed that the budget deficit reached only ₱21.17 billion last month, a little short of the ₱22.79-billion ceiling.

In contrast, the Macapagal-Arroyo administration overshot its deficit targets in August and September due to excessive public spending.

The October figure brought the 10-month gap between collections and expenditures to ₱182.07 billion as against the target of ₱172.5 billion.

This increased the possibility that the government would meet its full-year budget deficit target of ₱202.76 billion.

"From all indications, this October deficit is within program, if not below the target," said Finance Secretary Jose Isidro Camacho.

Camacho said the budget deficit came in below target because the top two revenue agencies exceeded their collection goals in October while the Bureau of Treasury maintained its spending within expectations.

Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin added that based on disbursements of cash allocations, the government was able to rein in expenditures to below the ₱76-billion ceiling for the period.

"We could even post a lower budget deficit (compared to the ₱202-billion target)," Boncodin said.

The Bureau of Internal Revenue said it collected ₱55.672 billion in October, up by five percent or from its target of ₱53.194 billion.

The Bureau of Customs, on the other hand, said its collections last month reached ₱9.252 billion or ₱191 million higher than the ₱9.061-billion goal and ₱1.079 billion more than the collections recorded in the same period last year.

The BoC must collect ₱100.56 billion this year and the 500 ocean carriers ₱624 billion for the government to meet its ₱202-billion deficit target for the year.

## RP 2003 farm growth up 3-4%

THE PHILIPPINES said on Tuesday farm output should rise an annual 3 to 4 percent this year, including a 3.7 to 4.7 percent jump in the fourth quarter, assuming weather conditions remain favorable.

Agricultural production, which contributes a fifth of the country's total gross domestic product, grew an annual 3.69 percent in 2002.

Typhoons in the third quarter of this year were a boon to rice farmers as they brought ample water for irrigation, but strong winds and flash floods destroyed some swathes of cornscape, officials have said.

"In the last quarter this year we expect an expansion in the range of 3.7 percent to 4.7 percent, assuming we will not have typhoons and floods in the remaining seven weeks of 2003," Agriculture Secretary Luis Lorenzo said a news conference.

"Year-on-year, our agricultural growth may reach between three and four percent."

Last week, the government announced that output in the third quarter grew 4.32 percent year-on-year, sharply higher than the 1.38 percent growth posted in the second quarter.

In the third quarter of 2002, agricultural production grew a revised 1.92 percent.

"We expect across-the-board expansion," Lorenzo said of the fourth quarter.

"Poultry and livestock, fisheries and of course crops—particularly rice and corn—will likely do well."

The Philippines is the world's largest shipper of coconut oil and products, and one of the biggest exporters of tropical fruits such as mangoes and bananas.

But it is one of Asia's largest rice importers and also ships in corn and other animal feed.

Reuters

South & South East Asia Regional Headquarters: Canon Singapore Pte Ltd 79 Anson Road #09-01/06 Singapore 079906 www.canon-asia.com

BAGONG TAON 3
BAGONG HARI NG DAAN
November 15, 2003 to February 15, 2004
SEARS

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 11
PHILIPPINE DAILY INK
LIFESTY

Chris Baird-Ferriera
Chief of Correspondents
Pink Patter

# Mariah is diva as diva gets

Photos by Rich Meera

Yes, Mariah Carey is the diva. "Mariah is a girl that every man wants to do, every girl wants to be and every transvestite wants to look like," joked my concert secretary Mike Sandoval, who, along with more than 20,000 urbanites, braved The Fort opens field to watch La Prima Mariah.

Whether they were star-struck fans or stick-phenom-seekers, the crowd filled the field from here to eternity. I didn't actually expect to see the whole of Manila to be there. Even society mavens in basketball stars to glitz-ter dominos, they were all there to witness the virtuosa of Miss Honey herself.

While waiting for Mariah's arrival, the male voices of the Madrilian made sure the audience had their fill of sound delight. Kudos to them for the fab four. They were one front act that the audience actually enjoyed. For a while, I seemed to have overheard the whole night. And then she arrived.

From her car, she walked with a silhouette of bodyguards, walking along the grass field of The Fort. Of course, pandemonium ensued. Good thing the organizers had complete control of the situation. Everybody was forced back to their seats. This was not the case during another concert concertor ago where the whole crowd moved towards the stage (Well, I overheard from the MTV folk. Dash off rumors, Francis Lamont) that for this concert alone, 99 homicers, 200 ushers and 300 Philippine National Police officers were dispatched all over The Fort. There were so much armed men that one of Mariah's hairy-ocolists, Tikka, said, "I've never seen this much armed men in my life!"

She came out in a white outfit and sang a total of 15 songs. She started with a barely three-thing-thing dress that was just enough to cover her privates and ended with a bang in a feathered Roberto Cavalli ensemble. In the middle of her performance, she would ask the audience and her band members... "So, do you like the ensemble?" while shaking her b-o-o-t-y. As if anyone in his right frame of mind would dare say no.

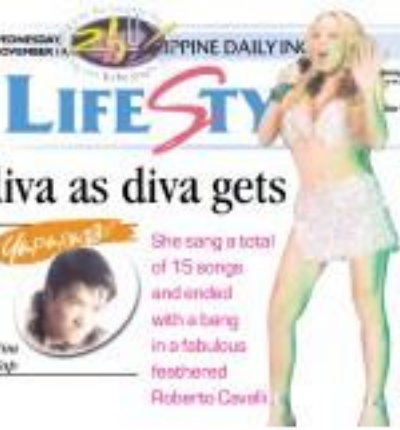
A funny thing happened onstage when, as she was entertaining her band members through a song, she all of a sudden said (again, half-singing), "There's some sort of bug onstage and it's scaring me," while shoo-ing the audience in stitches. The humble Pinay-ness (credit card) made the show. Maybe he was a big fan of Mariah as well.

Some people were disappointed that she didn't sing "Dripping on The Heatsche," which is the latest single in her album. But most people were more than pleased with her experience. She sang one hit after another,

(Mariah p. 2)

AUTOMATIC PRINCESS! Mariah struts her stuff in the catwalk-inspired outfit.

SINGING her version of the Jackson Five's "I'll Be There" with Trey L.



First Sight

She sang a total of 15 songs and ended with a bang in a fabulous feathered Roberto Cavalli

CHUMMED BRACELETS. Trio's ree with Mariah, Trey Lorenz, Ria Reeners and JM Rodriguez.

2BU! THERMOMETER

# Mariah mania!

**THE UPPER SCORE.** Because the concert was part of the "Charmbracelet" tour, some people were convinced that Mariah would sing unfamiliar songs from the new album. But Sony recently was embarrassed by Mariah's fallout over "Clown" into that everyone, from co-A to today, has heard more than once on the radio.

**THE BACKUP SINGERS.** Not only did they help make the soundscore sound, they were also given the chance to shine and they grabbed it. They all had amazing vocal power.

**THE CROWD.** There were all kinds of people there—young, old, students, celebrities, athletes, musicians etc., etc. Apparently there are more Mariah fans in this country than anyone would care to admit.

**THE VIDEOS** of music videos and audio-visual presentations behind us the music. The one played during "My Saving Grace" was especially touching.

**MARIAH'S OUTFITS WERE HOT.** Actually, not just hot. More like sizzling. Our favorites were the hot pink shorts, the teeny black dress and the fedora (a mouth gown).

**THERE** got crowded in expressing their love for the songbird. A lot of people waved goosenecks and other floating toys, some screamed out their affection, while others held up signs. Our favorite read, "Can you be my close friend? I'm Nicole."

**SOME.** the lights were beautiful, they made us forget the day was cloudless. But we expected a more elaborate set-up. After all, part of the hype was that a lot of time and effort was spent on building the stage.

**PEOPLE** who didn't watch have been asking those who did, "Did you get your money's worth?" A lot haven't decided yet. Some people think it was too short, while others think it was just right.

**WHAT WAS BAD WAS.** some of the ushers were unwilling to help you get to your seat, saying others had probably taken it already because there were a lot of people. What's up with that?

**THE CONCERT STARTED LATE.** 15 minutes. 8 p.m.? Not.

**"THEY CAN SAY ANYTHING THEY WANT TO SAY..."** Now we can't get her songs out of our heads. But that's not really too bad. There are worse cases of ear-worm syndrome.

**THE CLOWNS** were tougher than usual, shooting out people to sit down on their others of the back could see. That was good. They were able to inject the right amount of disruptions without sacrificing the people's enjoyment.

**YOUR FRIENDLY** household who took exception at the concert and stunned the spotlight with Mariah. That was pretty funny.

**PEOPLE** were blocking the entrance. Those with tickets had to push, shove and use force to get to the front so the guards can let them in.

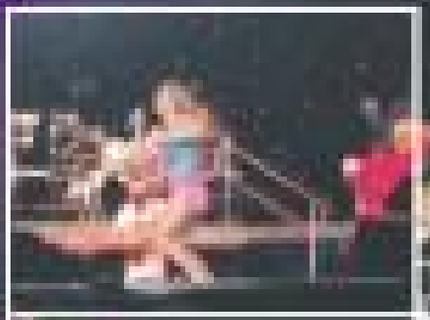
**THE DRUG.** Some areas leading to the restrooms were extremely muddy. Because pre-intermission tickets had set-up ramps on the sidewalks, a lot of the audience members had to walk through the grass, unaware of the nasty surprise waiting for them.

**GETTING OUT.** Because the Fort is mostly inaccessible to those without their own vehicles, and there weren't enough cabs and buses for the huge crowd, a lot of people were seen walking back to the Makati Central Business District after the concert.

**APPARENTLY,** the people sitting on the sidewalks knew about the money traps, but instead of warning the potential victims, they prefer to sit back and flood with laughter. So yes, a lot of people were wet and muddy when watching the concert.

**BUT YET.** all for the love of Mariah, right?

# Mariah is diva as diva gets



**SLIMMING** may from the long? Mariah down on her diva cravings.

**EFFORTLESS?** reaching the high notes

**FOTOS** for the night: Rich Abrams with his honey

**SAXOPHONIC** Lemon

**KISSES BACK** JR finds Mariah with some

**DAZZLING** the audience with her sing-about-nothing-but-sounds-great

Turn to page A2

drowning the audience with a nonstop sprinkling of chart-topping goodness.

Her last song, "Hero," brought the house down. A friend was asking if some parts were lip-synched, but I'm not an expert on those things, so I really wouldn't know.

At the after-show party at Shangri-La's newest spot (for some choral flicks), guests waited for her. The whole Shangri-La lobby was filled with fans who got hold of where she was staying. Security was extra strict though, so nobody could go near the spoiled songbird.

Two hours after, Globe VIPs and custom winners were ushered upstairs to the presidential suite where a meet-and-greet was to take place. Again, she made everyone wait. A member of the production staff said that she had to take a bath after the concert and had to redo her makeup.

When she arrived, everyone fell silent. She was actually big in person. Big, as in Beyoncé big. Larger than life if you want to call it that, rather an hour she was downstairs we had for her diva-esque party.

The first thing she told me when she got to the party venue was, "Too bright, too bright!" Apparently, Miss Mariah was very particular about her lighting. I panicked and told the floor staff to dim the lights. All of a sudden, the room became dark. Thumping R&B music played in the background. Indeed, when Mariah wants, Mariah gets.

## Bazaar season

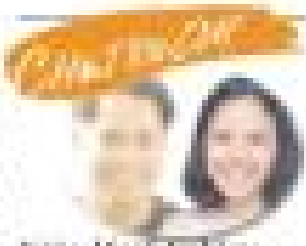
The women is just around the corner and everyone is busy bazaar-hopping. This coming Sunday, Nov. 23, there will be the Treasure Christmas Bazaar at the Intercontinental Hotel with Penny Mabolo as chair. Expect fab finds at this annual event.

It's 30 days till Christmas, folks.

Expect

**THE WHOLE** enchilada (Outside the Phone Booth)

# Should she give her once-cheating BF a second chance?




Abby Hart Sullivan
& Jayawardhini Mahadevan

Dear Abby and Mark,

My boyfriend is the sweetest and most thoughtful person I've ever met, and we somehow have been together nearly two years. Nine months, we'll be celebrating our anniversary next month. We have very excited about it. However, just recently, I found out [redacted] never stopped talking to his ex. No, he's not gay.

Long story, when I went to a birthday party with my girl friends, one of them confronted him. She [redacted] with me and [redacted] my boyfriend. He [redacted] and [redacted] me in a couple.

This happened months ago, and it is only now that I found out. Of course, I [redacted] confronted him, and [redacted] denied that he [redacted] with her boyfriend. He promised he wouldn't do it again, but it's so hard for me to accept the fact that he's not what I thought him to be. Do you think he deserves a second chance?

ABANDONED

Being a guy myself who probably falls [redacted] cheating moments, this is [redacted]

When [redacted] acknowledges that they [redacted] friend on phone or [redacted] conversations. Love may not [redacted] other partners, [redacted] and [redacted] [redacted] isn't [redacted] there is [redacted] [redacted] [redacted] to be [redacted] [redacted] to [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

When [redacted] [redacted] [redacted]

EXCLUSIVE

# Max Pirkis, future prime minister, is a master in his film debut

PETER Weir's [illegible] Commander That's on Patrick O'Brian's [illegible]

By Rubina V. Nogales
LA Correspondent

LOS ANGELES—"Meet sixteen-year-old Russell Crowe. In a henchman-hotel tanning room, the Oscar-winning actor stands in jogging pants and sneakers, pulls a T-shirt, swivels it this way to the person and then with Max who is standing. The sight of the actually not breaking and looking up at the actor sees reality, talk quickly is startling.

Later, Russell tells Inquirer, "I just went to [illegible] to [illegible]. Russell there's a lot of pressure on him. I felt sorry for him bringing his cream of known. He's doing great."

Russell describes Max, who portrays his youngest crew member in the upcoming adventure "Master and Commander": "Max is a lovely little chap. It was a pretty cool first experience. Peter Weir puts you right in the middle of [illegible] and their commanders so what they're doing. Max's prime minister is a magnificently mature performance, considering that he's a young man who never made a movie before. But he's one of those children who could [illegible] to act what the job is, grabs the concept with both hands and allows himself to be emotionally [illegible]."

Ready-made for a young thespian's [illegible] [illegible] weight-to-age. In his glowing review of "Master and Commander," Mr. Ebert's notations: "Jim immediately good looking Max Pirkis."

The subject of all this adulation, described in an article as resembling a younger Prince William, seems to be taking it casually. Max, in a black T-shirt, jeans and brown sandals shoes, is remarkably relaxed when he talks to the reporter. The blonde adolescent occasionally looks his brown-robin-taking-a-question-line he smiles and looks straight into the eyes of writers when he gives his answers.

When inquirer asks the London resident how he managed to be cool, he confesses, "It's weird. I was look calm and composed but I actually get quite nervous before the stuff. I just credit to both my parents who are pretty calm, especially my dad anyway more. Getting in front of people in sports competitions at school also helps." According to Phil Patrick, Max goes to Eton. The education and training that Max receives in the school, producer of 15 prime ministers, somehow in the boys' mind-blot awareness and the basis of Boyle's "future prime-ministers" training.

Max's prime screen test with in the movie adaptation of two novels from Patrick O'Brian's beloved book series "Master and Commander" and "The Far Side of the World." Science the film's title). He plays one of the midshipmen—officers in training—on board the ship for education—as Russell's Captain Jack Aubrey chases a heavy-armed French ship to disastrous high seas. Apparently in that set-film film is set in 1804, children are commonly hired in ship crew members.

# Max Pirkis, future prime minister, is a master in his film debut

"COMMANDING: the impressive bravado of Russell Crowe and the bookish reserve of Paul Bettany" was how one critic described Max Pirkis in a review of one of this year's most adventurous films.

PAIR: 13, and other boy actors trained to fight with swords and shoot pistols for their roles as officers in training aboard 19th-century ships.

What's acting maybe to round robust, his 13-year-old Lord Blakeney character undergoes an unexpectation done in giddy 19th-century style and in evade condemnation aboard a ship by Paul's physician character, Stephen Maturin. Later, as Maturin recuperates from an operation he performed on himself, he and Max's Lord Blakeney forge a friendship. When they land on spectacular Galapagos Islands ("Master and Commander" is the first known film ever allowed to shoot here), Maturin, who is also a naturalist, and Lord Blakeney have a grand time exploring the fascinating setting. A discerning listener, you'll enjoy this idyllic and look to a fantastic sea battle.

Sidelining a quiet dignity around for his age, Max holds his own in his scenes with Russell, Paul, Billy Boyd (Pippin in "The Lord of the Rings" trilogy) and other big actors.

Since May, three-time Oscar-best director nominee for acclaimed films that include "Dead Poets Society," describes his talented young find: "I had Max and the other boys doing research on the midshipmen in the British navy. There was, luckily, quite a lot written about midshipmen. These were written by kids of that period about observations of their life at sea. Some of them were accounts on three lines by officers or retired officers about their days as midshipmen, which they organized in most enormous rubric and the true beginning of their lives. They were treated like young gentlemen. But many of these midshipmen died from disease or injuries.

Weir continues, "Max took his research for the role seriously. He understood what I wanted. I told him, 'you've not going to have what we would think is the normal emotions today where the captain will have counseling after a battle. At the end of the course, the boy looks so exciting, having done things and seen things that a 13-year-old shouldn't see or do. He has taken from, for a start, and lost a friend. And the chaos (Paul) looks up to him, but there's no 'let's talk about this one: talk. It's just, 'here's a bottle—why don't you get back in there/ing, get back to it.

Max counts Paul among his favorite people "not just because he's in 'The Da Vinci Code' because he's such a nice guy and a great actor."

Of Russell, Max admits, "At first, I was intimidated working with him. Then I saw that he's actually a pretty average guy. Quite funny. He likes joking around. He's really generous, you get lots of presents and stuff.....and he acted like a true officer. He organized a weekend stay in San Diego. We went to SeaWorld and swam with the dolphins. On the set, he made sure everyone got screen time.

"Russell also organized rugby tournaments on Sundays," Max adds. "It's touch rugby, luckily I would have been killed otherwise. The games were like a way of getting to know each other because the film is very much about friendships. Russell brought them for the different crews."

These reminiscences were held in library, where most of the filming was done (on the same water tank where "Titanic" was shot except it was made larger for this movie's sea battles). A recorded cast and crew went to film in Galapagos.

"It wasn't Max's first time to go to Galapagos because he's from there," the actor Paul tells the reporters and dinner laughters. "It was my first time. You are my point. Kids from Wales don't go to Galapagos."

Max recalls his first trip to the islands which was visited by Charles Darwin in a historic voyage in 1835. "When I was 10, we went on a tour of Peru and Ecuador for six weeks. We stayed for a week on a boat in Galapagos."

Max's second trip to the home of the almost extinct giant tortoise seemed less than idyllic. The cast and crew stayed in a small tour ship built especially for touring The Galapagos. "We were on the boat for 10 days," he says. "The first day it was just fun going out to the sea. Then people got really quite sick. I wasn't (the 3-month 'but I finally had to take some so as not to get sick. I recovered."

Max has scores with birds, iguanas and other fauna that the Ecuador island province is known for. However, he admits, "I'm not much of an animal person. I've got two dogs but I was never really fascinated by things. Last year in school, we dissected some animals but I felt queasy. I'm not really into biology. But going out to Galapagos and playing a part where you're interested in insects and stuff is quite fun to do because it is something different."

Playing a sea-armed lad later in the film also provided him a different experience. "It was strange to begin with," he explains. "But you kind of get used to it. You learn to do things with your feet based like sailing. It's surprising how much value there is in having your hands. But I got used to being sea-armed. By the end, I was doing all sorts of things that I wouldn't have done in the beginning."

Asked if he has read the Aubrey/Maturin novels, so turned become French (Ofoun's best-selling series involved around the friendship of these two men), Max confesses, "My mom had read them and she tried to introduce me to them. I'm definitely going to try and read the books now that I have the movie."

What's more, a publisher (And's a stockbroker) sitting done by during the interview, is sometimes more interesting to watch. She is a right to behold as she reacts to her son's calm answers, from bemused shaking of her head while smiling and covering her face to wide-eyed pride, a beaming is that-my-son-speaking-smartly manner.

Saying that it "is kind of a relief" that his filming days are over (at least for now) because he "missed playing sports, friends and school," Max declares an unbroken attitude toward his acting career. "I never really decided to be an actor," he states. "I didn't have a great desire to be one. When I got the part, it sort of came from out of nowhere. The casting people were looking for children of my age. They came to my school because obviously there are boys of that age in my school. I had several auditions with Peter Weir and then I got the part."

As for the salary he earned for doing this film which is presumably a lot of Doctor bucks, he says with a laugh, "The money, unbeknownst, went into the bank. I'm not allowed to touch it until I'm 16. But we had per diems which is money to buy stuff. Most of the time, we went over the U.S. Mexico border to San Diego by train. We saw films and bought DVDs. I also bought a scooter."

Already showing that very British humor, Max proceeds to reveal The Day: "When the movie comes out, it's going to be embarrassing."

He reconsiders the idea of an acting career after the matter is brought up again. "If the filming doesn't interfere with school and exams and, I know this is a lot to ask for, if it's a good director and a good script, then yeah, I will do another film."

"But I don't need to work," he states with surprising emphasis. "Doing films is fun, but it's also having a normal life with friends."

Here their lines offset his turns to his mom for the first time, for just to confirm what he already knows. The unwavering honesty with which only a child can answer makes the press laugh and wins them over: "Not as far as I know, no."

RUSSELL Crowe as Captain Jack Aubrey

# The price of F4 fanhood

By Suvi Manners

[illegible] were first willing to go just to be at the premiere of F4's fanmeeting, Jenny Tan!

As name, the answers were joining an online group, ranking country. In others, it was praying that their names be picked from the hat. And others in a draw kit.

As the more adventurous went, it was fostering the right security in Le Pavilion, the premium venue with nothing but bold determination to get in.

Sorry Lin, as every spectator, it was bidding the highest amount for a fourth passport (with the promise to no unauthorised parties).

## Fateful night

The night before Jenny's premiere, she and her boyfriend, Meredith, were waiting for video clippings of Jenny's way to Manila to be thrown on TV.

Just then, Meredith received an SMS from an offscreen informing her that someone was auctioning a passport invite to see tickets.

Attending as the manager, it would be a closed auction; no one would know how much the others were bidding. The auction would run until midnight of Nov 6.

Thought was Meredith who called Lisa to as bidding, she wasn't quoted from the death when Lisa announced she'll bid for the invite for P15,000.

When called was why she bid that high, she answers that she just went with her "gut feel." As a businesswoman, she knew that many people could afford P5,000. She didn't want to take the risk of missing her chance to see Jenny even from a distance, just because she wrangled up a few thousand bucks.

Minutes after she texted her bid, a woman who introduced herself as "Mel" called. She explained the details of the auction to her. If Lisa won, she'd call after midnight.

After grueling hours of running to the point of losing hope, Mel called again to congratulate her, announcing she'd won the bid, and giving instructions on how she'd pay for and get the invite.

Lisa didn't have enough cash with her that time, so she borrowed money from Meredith who willingly lent her more after a short trip to the ATM machine to around 1 a.m.

She waited for Mel, as agreed, at her house. Mel never did the deed! Pelt characters. She was, after all, endorsed by a well-known name from a publishing company.

When she finally got hold of the passport, Lisa said she felt an indescribable feeling of happiness.

She cancelled a very important meeting on the day of the premiere. She didn't even attend the dinner with her boyfriend about where she was going that day...mainly because she didn't want her daughter (which also a fan of Jenny) to feel left out, but also because she was not sure how she'd tell her boyfriend about the P15,000 twist.

When she got to the Le Pavilion, she carefully followed the instructions Mel had given her: act like a member of the press, be alert, exude an air of self-importance.

When successfully presented what her assumed was the wife from, she had to really secure, as she invested two. And she got in!

Three days, Lisa talks with smiles of regret in her voice, saying that seeing Jenny in person was all worth it.

## Friendster business

Ms Almond she never really wanted to sell the passport, which she got from a friend. She just wanted to know how many people were about Ms. from anonymous, she posted details of the auction in the fanboys heart of friendster.

Word got around, and soon, so was that 20 people visited her. She said that the highest were all strangers to her. Mel had to call all of them to verify whether they were serious or not.

She changed her mind about not selling when she realised that all of the bidders were serious. She thought, hey, they were talking about huge sums of money!

Six set P5,000 as her benchmark. If anybody bid above higher, she would give up her pass. But a bad deal for a passport does not love nothing, and could be regained if the second, time she knew some people in the know.

Soon enough, a lot of fans bid beyond P5,000. The highest was, of course, Lisa.

Others threatened pressure a particular way away, not much. Some may turn say it's unpatriotic and unsentimental. But for a fan like Lisa, being with Jerry Yan in the same room didn't come with a price tag.

*E-mail the author at suvi@citymetallifer*

# New semester, new worries

## 2bU! offers tips to help you cope with the hassles of a new school term

By Arlene M. Paredes
2bU! Correspondent

A NEW semester means new challenges but you can overcome your fears by focusing your energy on starting the term right and making the rest of the school year fun and meaningful.

2bU! shares tips for dealing with common problems students encounter at the start of a new semester.

### Semibreak hangover

It's so hard to wake up early for classes after the break, isn't it? Your body clock needs to readjust to an early morning start. What to do? Use at least three alarm clocks or set them with snooze functions. Remember to warn your roommates, if you have any, of your alarm system so that you don't start your day fighting a war.

### Terror professors

They don't bite. You'll survive their classes as long as you come prepared. It will help if you can talk to some of their former students, ask members of volunteer campus organizations you belong to and get insights on your dream of prof. Your friends might have discovered that the nicest prof is actually the best teacher to your curiosities.

Labelling professors and prejudging them is not really a good thing. It is better to put your best foot forward in every class, to gain favor of the professor's expectations.

### Missing books

If your budget is tight or you don't have the time to find the books you need, let your friends help you. Ask them to check with their own friends.

Or try bargain book establishments or thrift shops to and around the campus. Some former students may have decided to sell their books after they graduate or quit their studies.

### Hectic schedule

The first week of a new term is usually easy as it is mostly spent on orientations or discussions of class syllabuses. But following weeks may become heavy with projects, quizzes and, before you know it, examinations. Your extra-curricular activities can also demand more of your time and attention.

Still, there's no need to panic. Plan ahead and, if this fails, practice the art of surrender. Avoid saying "yes" to every responsibility given to you.

If you belong to two or more campus organizations, make sure you give them equal attention so that you don't become less effective or productive in any one of them. Learn to say no to recruitment people who run the job if you know it's impossible to squeeze new tasks into your already hectic schedule.

### New house/roommates

Learning to live with new roommates is important. The sooner you make friends with them, the better.

You might have to live with them for the whole semester (or for several school terms). Try to know their better and discover common interests or activities you both enjoy. Your roommates can add more fun or pain to campus life. They can be your best friends or biggest foes. Deal with them with kindness and without prejudices.

But if it's impossible or if they want to keep walls between you, don't push it. Just try to exercise peacefully and make sure you do not end up murdering each other.

### Budget

Students normally have less money during the post-break. So they get excited with the idea of having an allowance to spend as they please. Be careful though not to spend everything at the start of a semester, leaving you with very little for the rest of the term. Spend wisely.

You can supplement your allowance by taking on-campus jobs for students, especially if you have a lot of free time.

E-mail the author at lhanp@yahoo.com

POSING for enemy

# A different kind of fund-raiser

## The Lumenistrum party had a young crowd and pulse-pounding music, but it was all for a good cause

Text and photos by Adrian Dy
2bU! Correspondent

A CHARITY event often means elderly society matrons coming together to shell out P5,000 for a plate of spaghetti.

But at Lumenistrum, held at the Strata Suites last Oct. 30, those traditional goodies were complemented by young, limited, three-story young, hot bodies and pulse-pounding music.

"It started as a joke, and somehow it evolved into a goal," said Yvette Ty, one of the organizers of the event.

Lumenistrum, which means light and dark, combined a fashion show and bottle of the night. What set it apart from similar parties were are so fond of working up is the fact that the event was for a good cause. Half of the net proceeds went to the Bantay Bata Foundation.

The bash was sponsored by JAC Cat Outfit and Pink magazine, with Pink's fashion editor Erin Paredes, styling the clothes donated by Cecile Ignacio Bautista.

Twenty aspiring models—Joana Yee, dressing by Daniel Tan; Grench Ivanna Kat Arandain, Jamie Reyes, Jennifer Ong, Joyce Chan, Mahee Arnaiz, Belyn Yee, Romelian Chan, Sophia Gerasco, Steph Chua, Stephanie Lim, Tetsuey Ty, Dale Ty, Enrique Ortiz, Manuel Ty, Mike Mendoza, and Roberto Sioco —donned the clothes.

Before the fashion show, Ben Mo & Drummer, Circuit 9, 2nd Road, Kismet, Left of Center, Peter Cairns, Rhyme Echoism and Trapezing Jeep performed, with Francis Cruz contributing an interpretive number.

The event was hosted by Joanna Ong, Lily Reyes, Edu Go and Christina Lee.

"We never quite conceptualized by the interest," Ty said. "We knew there would be quite a lot of people there, we just didn't expect that there would be that many people. When everything was over, we knew that our efforts had paid off."

Not only did Lumenistrum help Ty, but everyone had a good time. The audience were home satisfied, having gotten their money's worth, and the hosts and models got lots of free exposure.

With Lumenistrum such a success, will there be a repeat engagement? "Yes, but God, we've become we're going to beat on our studies. Maybe next year!" said Ty.

THIS model is playful in pretty pink.

FRIENDSTERS some so make kids happy